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MAR 14 1974



Volume III, No. 8

January, 1974

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

The Tietjen Suspension

FOR more than a decade events at the Sem had been building to the Tietjen suspension. Years before Dr. Tietjen took over the school's presidency Missouri had started to grow aware of the fact that its faculty harbored theological deviants, who wanted to lead the church away from its traditional theology, based on the Word, to a liberal theology in conflict with its Lutheran heritage.

The last four years a number of events speeded the crisis the Sem's Board of Control recently faced. The Preus election at Denver enabled the conservatives to recapture some of their strength in the church's structure. As much as possible they consolidated that strength during the first four-year term of Preus.

Moreover, the new president took the initiative in restoring theological order in Missouri with two critical decisions: he created the Fact-Finding Committee, which at long last gave the church an opportunity to judge for itself the reliability of the persistent rumors about the Sem's faculty. When the Committee's report had been made, President Preus also issued *A Statement* to serve as a guide to the teachings Missouri had traditionally held, on the basis of God's Word, concerning the doctrines now obviously in controversy.

That set the stage for New Orleans. There the church responded to developments by giving conservatives a sweeping election victory and by reaffirming its right to pass doctrinal resolutions to meet its critical needs in its struggle. It also condemned the St. Louis faculty's majority and its president.

After New Orleans the school's Board of Control had no options but to act in accordance with the synod's decision. Their action, the climax to more than ten years of discussion, rumor, evaluation, and intense feeling, suspended Dr. Tietjen from the Sem's presidency.

ALL future events at the Sem will be ramifications of this basic decision and responses to it. As this is written, it is not yet clear how matters will fall out. It may be that under God the Sem will have to pass through difficult days. But there can now be no turning back, and by the mercy of God the situation at the Sem will soon right itself.

The press, with its need to simplify news, has pictured Missouri's struggle as one between two men: Preus and Tietjen. In a limited way this simplification is true—but only in a most limited way. These two men serve only as symbols of the broader struggle—between Missouri's conservatives and her more liberally-inclined members. In the broadest sense, Preus and Tietjen serve as symbols of a great struggle of ideas—in the church and the world at large.

Preus carries on Missouri's traditional idea, embodied in

her constitution and by-laws, that a church body is a group of people banded together with the same common faith; they form a synod to preserve this faith by strengthening each other and by carrying out common educational and mission enterprises.

No conservative Missourian denies the liberal the right to his liberalism, no matter how deeply he believes the liberal to be in error and how much it grieves him. *But he does deny the liberal the right to be liberal within Missouri.* He does insist that Missouri was founded by conservatives, maintained through all its history by conservatives, and that these conservatives even now have the right to maintain their church body as they want it maintained.

A NUMBER of things seem to be almost generally true about Missouri's conservatives and their leaders:

They regret that the church has had to pass through its present trial, which has not been of their making, at the same time that they accept this stormy passage as a part of God's will.

They have not and do not express themselves with any rancor against those who have held opposing views; like Christian men they firmly stand fast on God's Word, but they also love those with other views and pray for their welfare.

Except for a handful of leaders, who may possess the essential facts, conservatives regard it a part of wisdom to wait for a fuller disclosure of the events in the Seminary case; they have the confidence that words like "malfeasance" have not been carelessly used.

And they hope, with real fervor, that the church can now begin to think of its primary work in the world. That with this crisis behind it (knowing that much still remains to be done in the Sem and in other areas of church life to reaffirm God's Word), Missouri can think in terms of rebuilding the Seminary so that it will again prepare men, in the way in which it did during most of its history, for the Christian ministry.

With that behind her, Missouri can turn her energies to the mission work for which she won a great reputation especially during the last generation and which God blessed richly as thousands upon thousands of people around the world through her witness found life everlasting in Christ Jesus.

The struggle is not over—make no mistake about that!

But at the same time, Missouri can thank God that He has by grace again brought her as far as He has!

And Missourians can ask God to continue to bless their work so that the church will witness to Christ as Lord and Redeemer with the clarity and winsomeness and power which have marked so much of her history!

How Should We Respond To New Orleans?

A few months ago a California pastor, at the request of a Conference Program Committee, answered in writing the question of the way in which Missouri's people should respond to New Orleans. It is an excellent statement and, though it has come to our attention some months after it was originally prepared, because it speaks with the timeless language and in the timeless spirit of the best in Lutheranism, AFFIRM is happy to bring it to your attention.

380 West Base Line Road
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September 27, 1973

Dear Brother in Christ,

OUR conference program committee has asked me to put into writing my thoughts on the question "How should we respond to New Orleans?" Since this is to be done in the spirit of fraternal ministry I shall respond to the question in the first person singular. I shall share my responses with you that you may agree where possible and that you may offer your suggestions where you differ in the same spirit that these responses are made. In other words, my intent is to indicate how I *am* responding and how I *intend* to respond to New Orleans. I consider mine a reasoned and reasonable response and present my views in a spirit of meekness, much prayer, and Christian love.

I am responding to our Synod's Convention at New Orleans as a child of God (1 John 3:1) and as a member of Christ's Holy Christian Church (Eph. 2:19,20). I am responding to New Orleans as one who willingly and voluntarily became a member of the clergy of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. As a child of God I am free (Gal. 5:1). As God's "free agent" I have joined a human organization (LC-MS) which is a "body under law" and which has its history and traditions. I count myself a member of God's "royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9). Other royal priests of God have called me to service as a Pastor of a Christian congregation, which is also a member of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Prior to the convention I joined fellow royal priests of God in praying that the Lord's will would be done at, in, and through "New Orleans." I believe that God is in control of His world and His Church and that He can use such poor tools as conventions and people to accomplish His purposes in our day.

I regard the people whom the delegates elected to office as God's gifts to His Church (Eph. 4:11 ff.) for such a time as this. I attempt to pray regularly and daily that God the Holy Spirit would guide and direct these *gifts of God* in their important responsibilities and assignments in that segment of His Church known as the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

THE delegates at New Orleans confronted issues that have plagued our Synod for at least two decades. I believe that the decisions of New Orleans reflect the position of the vast majority of the members of our Synod. I rejoice (1 Thess. 4:16) that the majority of delegates chose to underscore the right of Synod in convention to take a position on

important matters and to address itself to controverted issues (Res. 2-12).

Prior to New Orleans I joined many others in praying that the delegates at the convention would clearly indicate their attitude toward the Holy Scriptures. I rejoice that the majority of the delegates chose to accept "A Statement Of Scriptural And Confessional Principles" as a position paper that is in harmony with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions and, additionally, reflects the historical and traditional position which the LC-MS has held for 125 years. (Cf. Res. 3-01.) I see in the majority vote at New Orleans a rejection of reason and intellectualism as lords over the Holy Scriptures.

I am concerned that so many persons chose to indicate their opposition to Resolution 3-01. I have a number of unanswered questions at this point. Did those who dissented do so because they consider "A Statement" to be contrary to the Scriptures and/or the Lutheran Confessions? Did they dissent because they were afraid of how God's gifts to His Church (our Synodical leaders) would make use of this resolution of the convention? Was theirs a response triggered by the emotion of the moment? Was their response in any way conditioned by peer pressure?

I regret very much that circumstances compelled the convention at New Orleans to take decisive action in regard to the faculty majority at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. In retrospect I can only admire the delegates at the convention for their patience and for what I regard as the ability to deal with issues without unduly involving personalities. I have prayed daily, and will continue to pray, that the Lord of the Church would enable the Board of Control and the faculty majority to "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). My prayer is also that the mandate of the convention be carried out as evangelically as possible. I love the members of the faculty majority as individuals for whom Jesus Christ died. Yet I cannot agree with their general attitude and actions as they continue to show disregard for the wishes of the majority of the members of Synod. Their actions and attitude lead me to ask: Who is in control of Synod, under God? Who determines what is to be taught and how it is to be taught at Synod's schools?

I do not regard the taking of a stand, particularly if it involves the doctrine of the Word, as being sinful or loveless. We have examples in Scripture of individuals who took positive stands (Joshua, the Old Testament prophets, John the Baptist, Paul). The first "synodical convention" (Acts 15) also took a firm position which it understood as God-pleasing. I realize that it is difficult to live in the tension between conviction and Christian love and to make the distinction between disagreeing with an individual's position and still loving him as an human being whom Jesus Christ loves. But I believe that this tension is a fact of spiritual life in Christ's Church Militant.

I recognize that the vast majority of the laymen of our Synod and District favor a vocal and solid commitment to our Synod's traditional and historical position under the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. I feel compelled to assist interested laymen in determining whether or not they should form doctrinal concerns groups. I shall continue to help them identify others of like mind and shall assist them in co-ordinating their efforts.

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Walther's Stance on Theological Issues Currently Dividing the Synod

BOTH before and after the New Orleans Convention (July 1973) professors, pastors and teachers not sympathetic with the historic position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as enunciated in *A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles* have been endeavoring to depict C. F. W. Walther as a churchman and theologian who explicated religious views that the so-called "moderates" are advocating. The charge has been made that after Walther's death theologians like Drs. Pieper, Koehler, P. E. Kretzmann, Arndt, Engelder and other Missouri Synod leaders in the twentieth century departed from the sound Lutheranism taught by Walther in *Der Lutheraner*, *Lehre und Wehre*, in numerous essays and books, as well in his sermons. Statements are being taken out of context and isolated without regard for Walther's total theological position, even though this would result in making Walther a theologian who held contradictory positions on major theological issues.

The contention has been made by a number of writers that Walther held that as long as Law and Gospel were properly distinguished, it was not necessary to require agreement on other doctrines even though they were clearly revealed in the Bible. Furthermore, Walther has been portrayed as teaching that as long as a pastor or teacher held to the fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, namely, that a sinner is justified by faith without the deeds of the law, it was permissible to allow differing views on other Biblical teachings, even though no problem existed in understanding the Biblical words. For example, a recent writer cited the words of Walther delivered at the Western District Convention of 1859: "In it (i.e. the doctrine of justification) all other doctrines of our Christian faith are contained; if it is pure and upright, then all others are in proper shape," as permitting indifference relative to other clearly revealed Scriptural teachings.

For Walther the function of the pastor as preacher and practitioner of pastoral theology according to the "moderates" was to divide the Word of God properly in terms of Law and Gospel, and when this was done his pastoral activity was relevant and existential. This would mean that a pastor would be allowed a great latitude as to how he explained and interpreted the remainder of Biblical teaching.

The "moderates" are ecumenical-minded and opposed to the Synod's historical position on unionism. Those who hold to the Synod's stance on this matter are accused by the "moderates" as guilty of Biblicism, of a way of interpreting the Scriptures that insists "that unity of the church consists in points of doctrine." True unity it is claimed consists in being found in unity with Christ, by a unity of faith. This would mean that it would be possible to have fellowship with any religious group which accepts Christ as Savior (included would be all Lutherans in the world, Churches of either Calvinistic or Arminian origin, as well as Roman Catholics). Walther is described as impatient with those who quibble about purity of doctrine and practice, because in *Der Lutheraner* of 1856 (Vol. XIII), p. 58 he berated the orthodoxy of those who were guilty of "attacking every apparent heretic and everything which had the appearance of being ecclesiastical laxity with utmost ferocity."

REGARDING Lutheran confessional subscription as a basis for fellowship with other Lutheran bodies, Walther is said to have only required adherence to the *Augsburg Confession*. For the laity acceptance of Luther's *Small Catechism* was enough. On the basis of the *Augsburg Confession* Walther is described as willing to extend "the hand of fellowship" to other Lutherans.

What has just been given as Walther's stance only partially represents his true position, as it also influenced the subsequent history of the Synod. To appreciate Walther's work in America, a few facts from his life should be mentioned. Walther was raised in a rationalistic environment in Saxony. When he matriculated at the University of Leipzig, he had never heard a sentence from the Bible. It was through the testimony of an elder candidate that Walther found Jesus as Savior. When later he found himself in great spiritual anguish, Walther was pointed to the grace of God in Christ by the wife of the Steuerrevisor Barthel. He was also helped by Pastor Stephan, who advised him to lay hold of the full and free grace of God found in the unconditional promises of the Gospel. Sometime later in a period of illness Walther took up a study of the writings of Luther available to him in his father's library. In 1837 Walther was ordained to the Lutheran ministry at Braeunsdorf, Saxony. There he found himself surrounded by rationalism, with the church authorities committed rationalists who questioned the supernatural of the Bible and with it all the distinctive doctrines of Lutheranism. Walther's Biblical position and adherence to the Lutheran Confessions made the church authorities strongly dislike him. The result was that Walther resigned his pastorate and joined those Saxons who were determined to find religious liberty in America.

Arriving in America, Walther found a type of Lutheranism, known as "American Lutheranism." It was "essentially Calvinistic, Methodistic, Puritanic, indifferentistic, and hence unionistic, hence anything but Lutheran . . ." (quoted from the *Lutheran Cyclopedia*, Concordia, 1954, p. 28). Proponents of "American Lutheranism" attacked what was most prominent in the Lutheran Confessions.

WHILE it is true that Walther, like Luther, claimed that the justification of the sinner by faith is the central doctrine of the Christian faith, that Law and Gospel must be correctly distinguished as to origin, nature and effect and that the *Augsburg Confession* is the chief of the Lutheran Confessions, these views constitute important major emphases, but they do not represent Walther's complete position.

To begin with, Walther considered the *entire* Word of God as inspired, not merely some passages, and because they were the Word of God they were to be accepted, and it is immaterial whether they deal with fundamental or nonfundamental doctrines. Thesis XVII of Walther's book, *The Lutheran Church the True Visible* asserts: "The Ev. Lutheran Church accepts the whole written Word of God (as God's Word), deems nothing in it superfluous or of little worth but

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Pieper and Missouri's Crisis

THIS year marks the 50th anniversary of the completion of Dr. Franz Pieper's massive 3-volume "Christian Dogmatics." A theological giant, Pieper was president of our St. Louis Seminary 44 years (1887-1931) and during that time also served as synodical president for 12 years, 1899 to 1911.

Pieper, the best systematic theologian our Synod has seen, unfortunately is little used and rarely referred to by many of our professors today.

To be sure, Pieper—after a half century—needs to be made to speak to the new thought categories of our age. But first we will have to find the man with the qualifications for the task and, secondly, our seminaries will have to eliminate some of their "fluff" courses and cultivate anew in students a healthy appetite for solid systematic theology.

Meanwhile, we do well to heed the senior (Ludwig) Fuerbringer's oft-repeated remark that Pieper "must be considered and remain a standard work of Lutheran theology." A proper 50th anniversary project would find every pastor and professor in Synod reading again the three volumes which really were Pieper's lifework.

They contain sections which sound as if they were written specifically for the theological problems besetting the Missouri Synod today. Consider "Theology and Certainty," Vol. 1, 110-129. It begins, "The question how the theologian attains subjective certainty, how he attains personal assurance of the truth of the Christian doctrine is much discussed today." So it is!

PIEPER begins his discussion with Scripture's "clear and simple answer to the question concerning subjective certainty." He states, "Christ tells all Christians, including the theologians: 'If ye continue in My Word . . . ye shall know the truth (John 8:31-32)' Christ here states two things. First, there is such a thing as Christian certainty, 'Ye shall know the truth,' and, second, that this certain knowledge of the truth is identical with continuing in the Word of Christ, believing His Word. Faith is certainty. And when we ask further how this faith, which continues in Christ's Word, is brought about, Scripture again gives us a clear and definite answer. It is the Word of Christ itself which works faith in the Word of Christ (Rom. 10:17 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God'). The reason for this is that the Word of Christ, when we hear and read it and thus apprehend it with our mind, carries with it the power of the Holy Ghost."

Over against this God-given, Bible-based certainty Pieper sees "modern theologians" of his day searching for "the assurances of truth" in man himself. Tracing this "theology of self-assurance" back to Schleiermacher in the early 1800's, Pieper gives three marks of this "self-certainty theology": First, an indifference to doctrine, second, a unionistic practice of church fellowship with those not in doctrinal agreement and third, the tendency to reduce to "problems" many doctrines clearly revealed in Scripture.

ON the latter point, Pieper's comment sounds as up-to-date as any January 1974 theological journal: "They (modern theologians) speak of the 'problem' of creation and the preservation of the cosmos, the 'problem' of the person and office of Christ, of conversion and justification, of the inspiration of Holy Scripture, of the relation of the Christian religion and of the non-Christian religion; everything has become a 'problem.'"

All of which pretty well describes some of today's professors who, not knowing a clear "Thus saith the Lord," abandon a certainty based on Scripture, and foster a permissiveness which allows students to believe whatever appeals to their "ego-theology."

In summarizing the liberal theology of his day, Pieper aptly describes some 20th century symptoms as he approvingly quotes another writer: "The Radicals are set on substituting 'evolution' for creation, 'the principle animating the cosmos' for the living God, consciousness of the individual for the authority of the Bible, reason for revelation, sight for faith, social service for salvation, reform for regeneration, the priest for the prophet, ecclesiasticism for evangelism, the human Jesus for the divine Christ, a man-made 'ideal society' for the divinely promised kingdom of God, and humanitarian efforts in this poor world for an eternity of joy in God's bright home."

As one reads Pieper's analysis of the defects in the search for religious truth and certainty in man himself instead of in the unchangeable Word of God, the thought comes to mind as to whether this may not be the center of the problem, a half-century later, with the liberals ("moderates") in our own Synod. Starting with a spiritual pride, an intellectual arrogance, and a quest for something new, could this subjectivism, this ego-theology, be the body of a many-tentacled octopus? Certainly, the Historical-Critical Method of Bible interpretation fits the picture with its subjective treatment of the Bible, assuming the subjective right to peel back from an event in the ministry of Jesus, what supposedly (subjective decision) Matthew added as he wrote and what supposedly (another subjective decision!) the early church added as one goes about the subjective task of trying to get at the "kernel of truth" in a Biblical narrative.

FOLLOWING this would come a denial of the inerrancy of Scripture, a denial of its divine authority, a denial of Adam and Eve as historical people, a denial of original sin, a denial of the historicity of Jonah, the crossing of the Red Sea, etc. etc.

If that be true, then we have been occupying ourselves with the frustrating task of hacking at the tentacles of the octopus, when the body of the beast and the heart of the problem lie elsewhere, namely, in a misguided search for religious certainty in man instead of in God.

In any event, it is worth some thought. And, most certainly, Pieper is worth reading and studying again.

Pieper concludes his section on "Theology and Certainty" and his analysis of weaknesses in ego-theology with the happy thought that while "we must never overlook the danger threatening us from our American surroundings," yet "Among the thousands of our pastors there is to our knowledge not a single one who questions the inspiration of Scripture and, as a result, would be forced to espouse the Ego-theology."

Unfortunately, this cannot be said of the Missouri Synod today. However, if God be gracious, with New Orleans marking a return to our theological moorings, we may in some not too distant day again be able to say it. May God speed the day!

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
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What's It All About?

"WHAT'S it all about, Alfie? Is it only for the moment you live?" This refrain, from a pop tune of several years ago, expresses a concern that is common to all men. What's life all about? Who am I? How did I get here? Where am I going? What happens when I die? These questions distinguish man from the cow in the field and every other form of life. Indeed, for Christians who regard Genesis 1 and 2 as a reliable account of man's distinctive placement in the creator's world, these questions reflect God's own unique handiwork. Only man, because of God's special creative act, consciously reflects on his own nature and destiny.

Furthermore, there is a certain inevitability about this question. Each man, that is to say, must sooner or later face it squarely. Try as he may to escape the question, he finally must declare himself: he is either a mere animal, free to gorge himself with every sensual pleasure, and then, hoping that he has been right all along, to die; or, he is a creature of God, endowed with an immortal soul, responsible to God, and destined either to eternal bliss or eternal damnation. In the last analysis, each of us gives a variant of one of these two answers, if not verbally, then most definitely in the manner in which we live our lives.

The crucial question becomes then: "How do we know what it's all about?" Or, put another way, "To where or to whom do we go in order to get the truth concerning such an all-important question?"

The decisive nature of just this question is repeatedly underscored in Holy Writ. The fall of Adam and Eve, as described in Genesis 3, was specifically the result of responding to one who put forth false claims, namely, "No! You will not die! God knows that on the day you eat, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God." Indeed, it is a short step from this great deception, to the wilderness experience of our Lord, where again the great Deceiver sought to supplant the truth with a lie. Whereas the first Adam fell forthwith, the second Adam three times refuses to exchange the truth for a lie. And it is precisely in the method of His refusal that we find out how we are to arrive at, and hold to, the truth concerning God, concerning ourselves, and concerning the world about us.

JESUS knew that the ultimate source of truth was God alone and that God had spoken in the Scriptures. Thus, three times the Lord responds to the Deceiver's half-truths with "It is written . . ." For Jesus, the phrases "God says" and "It is written" were equivalent. If anyone would question this identification, all they need do is turn to Matt. 19:4, 5, where Jesus clearly takes a narrative portion of Genesis and attributes it to God with the phrase "God says." It is interesting to note how Paul, in similar fashion, freely interchanges God and the Scriptures as the subject of his sentence (compare Romans 9:17 with Exodus 9:16), or how the Lord's apostle attributes, in Galatians 3:8, the property of "foreknowing" to the Scriptures.

Further, our Lord, as the prophet whom God would raise up like unto Moses (Deut. 18:15-18), knew that this concern for a true and reliable word had marked God's revelation from the beginning. This theme is evident, for instance, in Deut. 18:21-22, where Moses even anticipates the concern of his hearers for a reliable word:

You may say in your heart, "How are we to know what word was not spoken by Yahweh." When a prophet speaks in the name of Yahweh

and the thing does not happen and the word is not fulfilled, then it has not been spoken by Yahweh. The prophet has spoken with presumption. You have nothing to fear from him.

The people would need some means to distinguish truth from falsehood and Moses gives it.

No more telling witness to the Divine concern for accurately conveying the truth could be cited than Jesus' sharp rebuke to the Jews in John 8:44-45:

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature for he is a liar and the father of lies. But, because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.

Jesus may well have had in mind at this point the devil's great lie, and resultant "murder" by the emergence of death, of Adam and Eve. It is most striking in this context that Jesus goes on to equate His own words with God's Word.

Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell truth, why do you not believe me? He who is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God. (John 8:46-47)

RETURNING to the temptation narrative, it is striking that in both the temptation of Adam and the temptation of Jesus, the devil employs sacred language to further his deception. Jesus immediately exposes the half-truth even though it is dressed in sacred verbiage.

This basic strategy remains unaltered to this day. For instance, a *credo* that is quite popular today goes: "I believe in Christ, not in the Scriptures." This posture, though seemingly ever so pious, is beset with many difficulties. After all, everything which invests the six-letter-word CHRIST with any meaning for us is found in the Scriptures. Undoubtedly the early apostles heard and knew far more concerning the details of our Lord's life, death, and resurrection than is recorded in Scripture (cf. the last verses of John's Gospel), but theirs was the privilege of first-hand witnesses. For us, however, there is no other access to our Lord's nature and life than that provided by Holy Writ. In so far as we admit errors into the Scriptures, we not only run counter to our Lord's attitude toward the Old Testament, but also undermine a Biblical Christology. The question, more aptly put, is not whether one believes in Christ or in the Scriptures, but rather, whether one believes in the Scriptural Christ or in a CHRIST who to a greater or lesser degree represents a mixture of one's own imaginations and longings. The more emphatic the insistence that one's faith in Christ is sovereignly independent of the reliability of the Scriptures, the more certain it is that the contours of *that* CHRIST will resemble the contours of *that* individual believer's projection of what seems good, meaningful and right to him.

This basic disavowal of the objective truth of the Scriptures always results in the substitution of another, and necessarily, higher authority to answer the basic questions of life. Two such authorities are finding some popularity among modern Lutherans. The one is fideism. Fideism, often defined

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"Our business is to present that which is timeless (the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow) in the particular language of our own age. The bad preacher does exactly the opposite: he takes the ideas of our own age and tricks them out in the traditional language of Christianity. Thus, for example, he may think about the Beveridge Report and TALK about the coming of the Kingdom. The core of this thought is merely contemporary; only the superficial is traditional. But your teaching must be timeless at its heart and wear a modern dress". (C. S. Lewis, *Undeceptions* [London: Geoffrey Bles, 1971], p. 68).

* * *

IN Lutheran circles a "bad preacher" of this sort will make a great show of his piety towards "the Scriptures and the Confessions." He will fight to the death any attempt to use "additional documents" as a test of orthodoxy. The reason is crystal-clear: if no "additional documents" can be enforced, then no dispute about the real meaning of Scripture and Confessions can ever be conclusively settled. "Scripture and Confessions" then cease to be living doctrine, substance, content, and become instead legal formalities, even fictions, e.g. a "paragraph" in a constitution, subject to the mechanics of parliamentary procedure. "Theology" then turns into a mad Hallowe'en party, where even that old "whore, Reason" (Luther) is free to do her own thing, provided only she remembers to wear her fancy-dress "Scripture and Confessions" mask!

A classic case in point is Philip Hefner's impassioned defense, in the summer, 1973, issue of *Dialog*, of LCA theology against some perceptive strictures which had been expressed by Prof. Leigh Jordahl.

I. Demolishing the Substance . . .

HEFNER hails the preamble to the LCA's constitution as "one of the most important theological statements in post World War II American Lutheranism, particularly when it is contrasted with the comparable Missouri and ALC statements." It "forges a contemporary expression of the Gospel, particularly with respect to the 'Word' of God" and "is a direct outgrowth of the theology that was being written and taught in the seminaries by men like Sittler, Bergendoff, Carlson, Knudsen, H. G. Davis, and others."

Take only the first and most prominent name in this list. In 1948 Dr. J. Sittler, a seminary professor in what was then the United Lutheran Church in America, launched a full-scale attack on the orthodox Lutheran doctrine of inspiration and inerrancy. His book was entitled *The Doctrine of the Word*, and advocated the standard liberal/neo-orthodox aberrations ("if we equate the Word of God with the Scripture, we are confusing things heavenly with things historical. The Unconditional is by such an identification delimited by the conditioned," p. 11). Nor was this a private venture: the copyright was held by "the Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church in America."

According to Hefner, of course, such attacks on Scripture merely serve the greater glory of Christ ("Christ is authority rather than the letter of Scripture and Confession or a rigid view of the 'Word' of God")! But how this works out in practice again becomes clear in Sittler's theology. Writing in the May, 1954, issue of *The Lutheran Quarterly*, Sittler argued for "A Christology of Function," and against the two-natures doctrine of Scripture and the Creeds. Christ's eternal

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pre-existence, he boldly suggested, could be taken to mean simply that God knew about the man Jesus from eternity! In other words, Jesus did not exist as a Person at all prior to His human birth! This is even worse than the Arianism of the "Jehovah's Witnesses"! And Hefner solemnly assures us that the LCA's constitutional preamble is "a direct outgrowth" of this sort of "bad preacher's" misuse of Christian terms.

"The ULC-Augustana-Suomi-AELC-LCA tradition reflected with theological seriousness in the years 1945-66 upon what the Gospel means and how it should be expressed," writes Professor Hefner. Perhaps. But the theological seriousness of the dominant ULCA component suffers from a considerable credibility gap. That church's official reaction to its North-west Synod's heresy-trials in 1955-56 is a fair gauge of its theological character. Pastors Crist and Wrigley had been convicted of heresy because of views like these:

"The ascension is quite obviously nothing more than a means of ending the resurrection appearances."

"I do not believe or teach that Jesus hears prayer."

"I do not know why it was necessary for God to become man . . . It seems to me Jesus saw no special importance in the dying, no cosmic, no universal forever-and-ever-and-everybody-in-history significance in his dying. He wasn't dying for me or for you. He was dying because it was the only way he could live as he saw he had to live." (1)

"Neither the Scriptures, nor the Creeds, nor the Lutheran Confessions declare that the 'historicity and actuality of the Virgin Birth' is a matter of faith." (2)

Yet *The Lutheran*, the official organ of the United Lutheran Church in America, consistently gave editorial support to these heretics. Its December 21, 1955, issue even featured an article by Reinhold Niebuhr, boldly entitled, "Symbols of the eternal must be taken seriously but cannot be taken literally." It said:

. . . Heresy trials almost inevitably revolve, as the Wisconsin trials do, around peripheral articles of the faith. The young men are accused, among other things, of not believing in the virgin birth of Jesus or in his "physical resurrection" or ascension. Are these beliefs really tests of the quality of faith? . . .

Does not any interpretation which makes acceptance of miraculous historical events the test of faith reduce the spiritual quality of that faith, and does not the application of such tests brand as heretics all but a few literalists and fundamentalists?

The issue raised in Wisconsin involves the validity of the religious symbolism. All symbols of the eternal, particularly those which assert the divine validity and revelatory power of events in history, must be taken seriously but cannot be taken literally. The well-known German theologian Rudolf Bultmann has made this issue central in theological thought both in Europe and America.

ism in Theology?

(from C. S. Lewis)

A theological analysis of the issues by 16 prominent ULCA seminary professors, in *The Lutheran* of Feb. 1, 1956, was much more cautious, but also more ambiguous. While the crasser heresies were rejected, there was a typically neo-orthodox hedging on the factual-historical aspects of the faith. On the issue of the Virgin Birth, for instance, the stress was shifted from the fact itself to its "theological significance." And: "The explicit denial of the virgin birth as a biological fact is, therefore, as unwarranted as the assertion that only in this particular way could the miracle of the incarnation have taken place."

II. . . . But Keeping the Hollow Form

PROFESSOR Hefner emphasizes that ULC-LCA "tradition", as he puts it, "chose and chooses to require no further definitions of doctrine beyond the Book of Concord in respect to determining who is genuinely Lutheran."

Let us recall John Tietjen's three-fold scheme in *Which Way To Lutheran Unity?* (1) The General Synod stood for an unconfessional inclusive confederation; (2) the General Council demanded confessional subscription to the whole Book of Concord; and (3) the Synodical Conference insisted on complete unity in doctrine and practice, and therefore on new doctrinal statements, above and beyond the Book of Concord.

From this model it would appear that the LCA's opposition to new doctrinal statements represents the old General Council's conservatism, in contradistinction to the *laissez faire* attitude of the General Synod. (Note: The General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South formed the United Lutheran Church in America in 1918). However, this conclusion, together with its premises, reflects a very shallow analysis, and is fundamentally mistaken.

The real dispute between the General Synod and the General Council was not over the form of subscription, or whether it should cover only the Augsburg Confession or the whole Book of Concord. It was rather over the real meaning of confessional subscription. The General Synod was satisfied with a legalistic-formalistic acceptance of a document (the *Augsburg Confession* as "a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the divine Word and of the faith of our Church as founded upon that Word." Interesting parallel: "Our commitment to the Lutheran Confessions means that we adopt their governing theological principles . . ."—St. Louis faculty majority, *Discussion Four*). The General Council, by contrast, insisted that the object of subscription was not a document as such, but its actual teaching, its doctrinal content. Hence a genuine acceptance of the Augsburg Confession's doctrine would be sufficient for fellowship, while a purely formal subscription to the whole Book of Concord would be meaningless without *de facto* conformity to actual confessional doctrine.

The Tietjen model appears glib and misleading when scrutinized in the light of real history. In 1893 and 1902 The Lutheran Publication Society published *The Distinctive Doctrines and Usages of the General Bodies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States*, by prominent representatives of these various bodies. Professor M. Valentine, representing the General Synod, wrote:

The Augsburg Confession therefore, the adoption of which is required of Synods as condi-

tional for entrance, becomes the statement of the doctrinal position and teaching of the General Synod . . .

The doctrinal definitions and developments in the other writings, especially in the Formula Concordiae, so far as they are not contained in the Augsburg Confession, are not essential to the Lutheran doctrinal system . . . Their particular explanations and developments . . . do not unite, but separate between those who agree upon the common basis of the Augsburg Confession, and would be one . . .

The General Synod's basis is thus wisely and lovingly adapted to unite *all real Lutherans* . . .

On the common Confession of Augsburg all Lutherans agree . . . it is of the very essence of [the General Synod's] confessional position and claim that the Augsburg Confession is itself the statement of what it holds, and that in the differences of understanding and explanation that have always marked the interpretation of some of its statements, undisturbed liberty shall be enjoyed (pp. 39-47).

The General Council's position was defined by its distinguished representative, Professor H. E. Jacobs:

The unity of the Church does not consist in subscription to the same Confessions, but in the acceptance and teaching of the same doctrines . . . In other words "that Confessions be a bond of union," they must be recognized as the expressions of an agreement that is deeper and firmer than that of the mere document that is recognized and subscribed . . .

It is well to notice that it is not the acceptance of the unaltered Augsburg Confession, but the acceptance of its doctrines, which determines the Lutheran character of a teacher or Church body. A man who has never subscribed the Augsburg Confession, or even never seen it, is a Lutheran, if he teach the doctrines which it maintains. A man who makes his subscription to the Confession an object of especial boast, is no Lutheran, if 'by equivocation or mental reservation,' or even by excusable misunderstanding, he depart from any of the doctrines therein clearly and professedly taught . . . The question as to whether he be a Lutheran or not, the General Council affirms, must be decided from his relation to the doctrines of the unaltered Augsburg Confession, and from no other standard whatever (pp. 94-97).

Contrary to the Tietjen-scheme, therefore, formal confessional subscription in the modern LCA-sense was the hallmark not of the General Council, but of the General Synod. The General Council and the Synodical Conference were quite agreed that formal subscription by itself was inadequate, even dishonest, and that what was required was a real harmony or correspondence between actual teaching and practice and the doctrinal content of the Confessions. The Synodical Conference was simply somewhat more rigorous and consistent in this matter. But even the General Council insisted on the adoption of formulations beyond the Book of Concord, viz., the "Fundamental Principles of Faith and Church Policy" of 1866—and even Tietjen admits this (*op. cit.*, p. 46).

(Continued on Page 10)

LC-MS Liberals Have Violated the Rights and Privileges of LC-MS Congregations

Missouri's liberals and those with leanings toward liberalism have defended their "right" to the deviant teachings they hold. Those who have been faithful to Missouri's historical doctrinal position have not in the past adequately responded to the liberal bloc's insistence on its "rights."

A Colorado congregation, Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Bloomfield, Colorado, and its pastor, the Reverend Wilbert J. Sohns, have forcefully stated the case of conservative "rights" within the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. While AFFIRM does not necessarily agree with every vigorous phrase contained in the document, portions of which are summarized below and other portions of which are reprinted substantially as issued by the congregation and its pastor, AFFIRM does believe that the general concepts the document presents are in keeping with the Word, the Confessions, and the purposes for which Missouri was organized.

THE congregation and its pastor take the position that the organized liberalism in the LCMS is a formal rebellion which "destroys and violates the rights of all faithful congregations everywhere in the exercise of their rights and privileges" as members of Missouri. The congregation requests Missouri officials to deal with "the insubordination in order to protect the constitutional rights of our congregation." It wants liberal activities within the LCMS to "immediately cease."

The Problem

In twelve paragraphs the congregation itemizes the details of the "rebellion" and states that the liberals have written and spoken false doctrine, made false accusation against correct doctrine, organized a "formal organization against the Synod," maligned and attempted to intimidate Synodical officials, threatened lawsuits against the church, claimed exemption from obedience to the LCMS constitution, destroyed the confidence of people in the Gospel, cast suspicion on faithful pastoral leadership, fostered discord and disunity, and diverted energies and money from Missions.

Handbook Responsibilities

1. Articles of Incorporation

Articles II Objects of Synod states that the Synod exists to unite those who remain true to the Book of Concord. The liberals should be held true in their confession and practice to the Book of Concord. Article II also states that the Synod exists to exercise supervision over pastors and teachers as to doctrine, practice and performance of their official duties. Article II requires that the false doctrine and practice of the liberals be corrected.

2. LCMS Constitution

A. Article II Confession. Every pastor, teacher and member of Synod is to accept without reservations the Old and New Testaments and the Lutheran Confessions. The liberals

have expressed many reservations by defending doctrine contrary to God's Word (cf. resolution 3-09).

B. Article III Objects of Synod. The objects of Synod are (1) conservation and promotion of unity of true faith and a united defense against schism and sectarianism; (7) supervision of the ministers and teachers of the Synod with regard to the performances of their official duties; (8) protection of pastors, teachers and congregations in the performance of their duties and the maintenance of their rights.

Rather than conserving and promoting unity, the liberals are promoting disunity and schism; rather than assisting in the united defense against schism they are promoting and have organized for schism. The constitution requires that these liberals be supervised and corrected, while the rights of faithful congregations and the performance of their mission duties are to be protected against such rebellious and mutinous activities.

C. Article VI Conditions of Membership. While Synod's constitution states that members are to renounce unionism and syncretism of every description, the liberals have defended and participated in union services and unionistic activities with other Lutherans not in fellowship with us, Protestants and Catholics.

D. Article VIII C states that all matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only by the Word of God and that all other matters shall be decided by majority vote. The liberals misunderstand this, for it suggests the Synod shall interpret and witness to the truth always on the basis of God's Word, just as the church has always done since the formulation of the ancient Creeds. Thus our Synod always has adopted resolutions based on God's Word. Thus President J. A. O. Preus has written in the September 16, 1973, *Lutheran Witness*: "And this is precisely what the Missouri Synod has repeatedly done in its conventions, including the most recent convention at New Orleans. The Synod confessed its Scripture-based faith through its actions just as the church did at Nicea in A.D. 325 when it formulated the Creed of Nicea. How else can a Synodical convention confess its faith? Does it not do so by voting? Shall the opinions of a minority be imposed upon the majority through parliamentary maneuvering and rump meetings? Is this more Christian than voting to see if all understand the Scriptures in the same way?"

E. Article XI Rights and Duties of Officers. A,2 under this article states that the Synod at all times has the right to call its officers to account, and if circumstances require, to remove them from office in accordance to Christian procedure. District Presidents, Synodical Executives, college and seminary presidents, and all other officers who have joined the rebellion against the Synod's purpose and aims should be immediately called to account, and that if they refuse to repent that they be disciplined and expelled. B,4 states that the president shall see to it that the resolutions of Synod be carried out, and we pledge our support to the president in carrying out this constitutional provision so that the rights of our congregation and all others are protected in the performance of our duties.

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Book Review:

Form Criticism Reexamined

Walter A. Maier

(St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 1973).
46 Pages, Paperback, \$1.95

IF there is one thing still holding Christianity together in our day, as a controlling factor, it is the Biblical Word. But what if that Scriptural Word is eroded? As is happening under higher criticism's attack? What will be the outcome of this ruthless manhandling of what Luther calls the "Holy Spirit's book?"

Maier, now 4th vice president of the Missouri Synod, zeroes in on one of the main techniques of this lethal attack on the Bible's text, its integrity, authority, and inspiration. The fact that form criticism seeks to investigate the various literary forms that appear in Scripture is not the alarming thing. Every Bible reader knows something about these forms. But the fact that the radical form critics usurp the authority from the text itself and engage in stripping vital content from Holy Scripture as a result of their so-called scientific analysis of the written forms which they find in the Biblical material is what the fight is all about. Bultmann has been a chief artificer in this whole nasty process and Maier describes his technique at length, in order to show the effect of this whittling away process on Holy Scripture.

What everyone ought to know is that all of these practitioners, including Bultmann, operate with an avowed refusal to believe any of the miracles of God. "Bultmann," Maier rightly observes—and this holds for the rest—"adheres to his antisupernaturalism altogether uncritically. His idea of history as an unbroken succession of events, all of which have exclusively natural causes and exclusively natural consequences, is unverifiable and is pure conjecture." Maier's conclusion is worth pondering: "It is not possible successfully to wed 'Lutheran presuppositions' or conservative presuppositions generally to genuine form critical methodology, as some in the church have urged."

Other books in Concordia's Contemporary Theology Series include John W. Klotz's *A Christian View of Abortion*; Werner Elert's *The Lord's Supper Today*; Han-Lutz Poetsch's *Marxism and Christianity*; Henry Hamann's *Unity and Fellowship and Ecumenicity*; and David P. Scaer's *What Do You Think of Jesus?* There's good reading to be had in this series.

Dr. E. F. Klug
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

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What's It?...

(Continued from Page 5)

as faith in faith, seeks to elevate one's experience and religious feeling as final authority. The fideist says that his faith is sovereignly independent of the historical factuality of Christ's miracles and the Scripture's reliability. Though the Bible be riddled with error, his faith is unshaken, or so he maintains. But alas, experiences are all alike. Who, for instance, can say that the Buddhist's experience is less fervent, sincere, or satisfying than that of the Christian fideist? We are unable to judge which experience conveys the truth since both are equally genuine. This extreme subjectivism and false elevation of faith as the formal principle—the source of our knowledge concerning the truth—leaves one afloat. The other substitute authority is a thinly veiled rationalism. The rationalist seeks to place his confidence in critical historiography. Because such a critical approach to the Word does not permit the miraculous events attributed to Christ, he must place his trust in the latest scholarly consensus. As that consensus changes, he shifts position, and so drifts forever with the times.

When, as in both of these cases, God's Word is placed below a higher authority for determining the truth, anxiety soon permeates the individual's spiritual life. Uncertainty replaces certainty, doubt replaces trust, and "Maybe" replaces "It is written—God says." Thus, we, as disciples who (with the Master) know to where and to whom to go for a true and reliable word, should daily sing a *Te Deum* that God has not let us to our own fickleness. Rather, he has given an objective and entirely trustworthy record concerning Himself, His creation, and our place in it. This Holy Word, thank God, is *extra nos*, i.e., independent of our frailty and conditionedness. It's here that we truly find out "what it's all about", for He who sees the beginning from the end, He who is Alpha and Omega, tells us. In a word, it's all about God—His Holiness and His mercy, His wrath and His love, His Law and His Gospel.

The peace of mind and heart of which the psalmist spoke is readily available to all who seek life's answers in God's Holy Word. We rejoice with him in saying:

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet

A light unto my path.

(Psalm 119:105)

Dean O. Wenthe, M. Div.
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Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

Contributions

With their generous support many of its friends have made the publication of *Affirm* possible.

You also can help defray its cost by contributing in any amount to:

Affirm

c/o Walther Memorial Lutheran Church
4040 West Fond du Lac Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216

Meditation . . .

(Continued from Page 7)

On the surface the ULCA-LCA "subscription" may indeed look like a victory of General Council confessionalism, for its object is not simply the Augsburg Confession, but the entire Book of Concord. But the resemblance is one of *form* only. In substance we have here exactly the General Synod's formula of a general profession without specific doctrinal obligations.

To paraphrase a famous quip about the Papacy and the Roman Empire, the LCA is the ghost of the General Synod, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof! In fact, even the outright rationalism/socinianism of F. H. Quitman still haunts some belfries of the LCA. (Example: J. S. Setzer, "A Fresh Look at Jesus' Eschatology and Christology in Mark's Petrine Stratum," *The Lutheran Quarterly*, XXIV, 3!)

Hefner repudiates (without refuting) any suggestion that the LCA's hostility to new doctrinal statements has anything to do with lack of theological seriousness. Yet the connection is obvious. Where theology is taken seriously, as the application of the God-given (and God-giving!) doctrine of the Gospel, there will be an on-going process of decision and definition, guarding the right understanding of Scripture against ever new misinterpretations and pseudogospels. Where men are unable or unwilling any longer to distinguish clearly and decisively (that means, with concrete consequences for church fellowship) between life-giving truth and death-dealing error, where theology celebrates no longer the liberating Word of Christ, Holy Scripture, but the secular-careerist will-o'-the-wisp of "academic freedom," there theology has unchurched itself and has become frivolous and irresponsible. In fact it is no longer theology at all, but mere religious philosophy, animated by that undisciplined subjectivism which is "the source, strength, and power of all heresy, including that of the papacy and Mohammedanism" (*Smalcald Articles*, III/VIII/9)!

G. K. Chesterton once observed that a white post needs constant repainting to remain white; it becomes black just by being left alone. It is the same with doctrine and confession. Culture, concepts, even language itself, change constantly. This means that Christian truth needs constant re-statement—precisely in order to stay the same! Unless the confessional "post" is kept "repainted" with up-to-date, relevant formulations, it is soon "re-interpreted" and assimilated into the surrounding pollution. For example, once those who denied the Real Presence paid lip-service to the *Augsburg Confession*, but rejected the *Formula of Concord*. In time they learned to take the *Formula* with a grain of salt as well (e.g. Leuenberg Agreement, Marburg Revisited)! And it is odd how the same arguments which were once used by the General Synod against all confessions beyond the *Augsburg Confession*, are now repeated against all statements beyond the *Formula of Concord*!

Unlike the old General Synod, which simply did not care (for example S. S. Schmucker's denial of such "non-fundamentals" in the *Augsburg Confession* as the Real Presence!) both the General Council and the Synodical Conference had the integrity to acknowledge the ongoing need to confess, to decide among conflicting claims, to counteract the relentless inflation and devaluation of theological currency. Even Tietjen admits in principle what he denies to his Synod in practice: "Yet those who formed the Synodical Conference were right in pointing out that similar constitutional statements concerning subscription to the Lutheran Confessions did not necessarily mean agreement on what the Confessions actually said. They were also right in insisting on the need for some means of insuring that those who claim to espouse

the *Lutheran Confessions* actually do so in practice." (3) But Tietjen is quite wrong in charging the Synodical Conference with having expanded its doctrinal position beyond that of the *Book of Concord*. New documents simply do not mean new doctrines! The *Thirteen Theses on Election*, of 1881, which Tietjen cites as a prime example of going "beyond the classic confessional documents of the Lutheran Church in order to determine what is Lutheran" (p. 150), were nothing more than a succinct, relevant restatement of *Formula of Concord*, Article XI. This restatement was necessitated by the shameless twisting of Article XI into its very opposite, by the sophistries of F. W. Stellhorn et al. The Thirteen Theses merely kept the post painted. Without them, Article XI would have become a dead letter, robbed of all content.

The living substance of Scripture and the Confessions resists all attempts to imprison it safely in legal clauses, archives, or museum exhibits of stuffed theological oddities. The theologian/confessor's task, therefore, like the housewife's, is never done. So long as bad preachers continue to trick out modern "critical" superstitions in the respectable garments of traditional Christian terminology, it must be our business "to present that which is timeless . . . in the particular language of our own age." To refuse to do so, even in the name of the Confessions, is to refuse to confess.

The Rev. Kurt Marquart
Member, Commission on Theology
Lutheran Church of Australia
Toowoomba, Australia
Advent, 1973

Footnotes

- (1) cited from actual trial transcripts in Robert Paul Roth, "Heresy and the Lutheran Church," *The Lutheran Quarterly*, August, 1956, pp. 248-250.
- (2) *The Lutheran*, Nov. 30, 1955, pp. 45 ff.
- (3) op. cit., p. 149.

Respond . . .

(Continued from Page 2)

I understand that according to the Bylaws of Synod's Constitution (3.41) District Presidents are to serve as representatives of Synod in their respective territories. I interpret that to mean that District Presidents are to carry out the resolutions of Synod in convention in a positive and forthright manner. I also interpret that to mean that District Presidents are the representatives of the Synod's President. I shall on my part, as God gives me the time and the energy, work in our own District for the election of a District President who is a true representative of our beloved Synod's traditional and historical position under the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.

In summary, I plan to abide by the decisions of New Orleans because they are in harmony with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, because they are in keeping with the traditional and historical position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, because the actions of the convention are in fulfillment of the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod, and because they reflect the position of the vast majority of the members of our Synod. I stand ready to enter into dialog with anyone who is ready to speak and to listen in the spirit of Christian love. I shall continue to live in the tension between conviction and Christian love. I shall continue to recognize that the Lord of the Church has called me to serve Him by serving others (Mark 10:42-45) and that He has commissioned me to "disciple-ize" (Matt. 28:16-20).

In the Master's service,
Arthur F. Graudin, Rel.D., Pastor

Liberals . . .

(Continued from Page 8)

F. Article XII Districts. This article states: (7) District Presidents shall exercise the supervision over the doctrine and administration of the pastors and teachers of their District; (8) District Presidents are empowered to suspend pastors, professors and teachers who are persistently adhering to false doctrine or for offense of an ungodly life. The liberals are seeking to destroy that faithful doctrine and administration of orthodox pastors and teachers. District Presidents should deal with these liberals evangelically and firmly to the end that they repent and again join the entire Synod in faithful obedience to God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions according to the constitution of the LCMS or that they should be disciplined.

3. By-Laws

A. 1.05 Duties of Members. Every member of the Synod shall diligently and earnestly promote the purposes of the Synodical organization by word, deed, and adequate financial support. These men have refused to support by word and deed and have openly and formally organized their rebellion against the basic purposes of the Synod for a united stand in doctrine and Biblical practice.

B. 1.09. The constitution, by-laws, and all other rules and regulations of the Synod apply to all members of the Synod, i.e., to all congregations, pastors and professors and teachers. By voluntary membership in the LCMS, all members voluntarily agreed to abide by the constitution, by-laws, and all other rules and regulations as they are stated in Synodical resolutions.

We Request

We request our sister congregations to stand with us faithfully in the fulfillment of our mission responsibilities under the Gospel, holding to the Word of God in all its truth and purity and avoiding all diversity of doctrine.

We request our District President to counsel and advise all those who joined in this insubordination to cease and desist in their activity, and join us joyously in a common confession of Biblical and Lutheran doctrine so that we might joyfully walk together in fellowship in the Gospel according to the purposes and aims or objects of our Synod.

We request the Synodical administration to exercise the rights of its office to keep the Synod united under the Word, and to deter all those who through their words and actions have brought discord into our fellowship.

We request the Synod's Board of Directors to direct the disciplinary responsibility of all Boards of Synod to deal with the insurgents on their staffs.

We request the Commission on Constitutional Matters to make a ruling regarding these activities of the liberals who have organized to obstruct the will and work of the LCMS as they ignore, disregard or disobey the will of the Synod according to Article II of Synod's constitution.

Envelopes Available

Congregations have requested contribution envelopes on behalf of AFFIRM for distribution to their members. These are now available. Please write:

AFFIRM

c/o Walther Memorial Lutheran Church

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and request whatever number you need. They will be mailed to you free and postpaid.

Certifying Clergy

When Resolution 3-09 was adopted in New Orleans, pointing out the false teaching contained in certain faculty documents from St. Louis, it seemed to follow that such a judgment would at once disqualify the faculty for certifying persons to enter the ministry. Even an unsophisticated Sherlock Holmes, it would seem, would call such a deduction rather elementary.

Yet certification goes on as usual, as though Resolution 3-09 did not exist. While it is understandable that the Board of Control has needed to familiarize itself in detail with the many problems of the Sem, to master the procedures involved in dealing with these problems and to take care of a large accumulation of matters which have to be taken care of, it does seem as though continuing to grant a faculty which has been judged less than adequate in doctrinal matters the permission and the authority to certify persons for the ministry is an item of business which should have high priority on the agenda of the Board of Control.

Affirm believes that every person in our church body who has, during these past years, been involved in attempting to put an end to a massive aberration in our synod must strongly feel that action on this matter is urgent.

Others Respond

In this country it has been traditional for church bodies and their representatives not to interfere in the internal difficulties of other church bodies. The rationale for this practice seems obvious; moreover, it conforms to normal usages in the field of government. Any breach of this rule usually draws wide criticism. Imagine, then, the surprise of many Missourians when *Religious News Digest* at the beginning of January carried a story with a St. Paul dateline,

The faculty of Luther Seminary here, an American Lutheran Church school, has expressed "concern and support for our **EMBATTLED COLLEAGUES** and brothers in Christ" on the faculty of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. The unanimously-adopted statement deplored "the fact that men who share our scriptural and confessional convictions are regarded as unfit to serve as teachers in a Lutheran theological institution." (12.17)

A similar breach of customary relationships occurred when the executive secretary of The Catholic Biblical Association recently made public, at the direction of the executive board of that group, a letter to His Eminence John Cardinal Carberry, Archbishop of St. Louis, Missouri, which not only contained statements critical of Missouri's conservatives, but reflected, in addition, erroneous views of the conservatives. Among other things, Joseph Jensen, O. S. B., wrote the Cardinal,

That control of a Christian community can be gained by militant fundamentalists is witnessed by recent events in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; if the new leadership succeeds in ousting from Concordia Theological Seminary those committed to critical scientific scholarship and remaking the institution along fundamentalist lines, that segment of Christianity will be effectively diminished and ecumenical dialogue will be hindered . . .

Walther's Stance...

(Continued from Page 3)

everything needful and important, and also accepts all teachings deduced of necessity from the word of Scripture." (Matt. 5:18, 19; Rev. 22:18, 19; Matt. 22:29-32.)

In Thesis XIII of the same book Walther wrote: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church recognizes the written Word of the apostles and prophets as the only and perfect source, rule, norm, and judge of all teaching—a. not reason, b. not tradition, c. not new revelations." (Deut. 4:2; Josh. 23:6; Is. 8:20; Luke 16:29; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Cor. 1:21; 2:4,5; Col. 2:8; Matt 15:9.) This is the teaching of the Lutheran Church. Walther then gives quotations from the *Smalcald Articles* and the *Formula of Concord* in support of his position.

In his treatise, *The Proper Form of A Lutheran Congregation*, Walther asserts in its opening statement:

An Evangelical Lutheran local congregation is a gathering of believing Christians at a definite place, among whom the Word of God is preached in its purity according to the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the holy Sacraments are administered according to Christ's institution as recorded in the Gospel, in whose society, however, false Christians and hypocrites will always, and manifest sinners may sometimes be found.

In support of this assertion Walther listed many different Bible passages as well as quotations from the *Lutheran Confessions* (not merely limited to the *Augsburg Confession*) and Luther's writings.

In Chapter II, Paragraph 6 of the same writing, Walther stated: "It is the duty of the congregation carefully to see to it that the Word of God may richly dwell and have full and free scope in its midst." (Col. 3:16) "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly etc." Throughout this work Walther quotes over a hundred of individual passages from both Testaments.

In Thesis XIV of *The Lutheran Church the True Visible Church* he asserts that the Ev. Lutheran Church holds fast to the clearness of the Scriptures (There are no "views" and "open questions.")

Theses XIII-XXI contain a series of basic interpretative principles that make it totally impossible to employ the Historical-Critical Method, the new methodology advocated and defended by the "moderates" in the Synod. Throughout his whole lifetime Walther vigorously opposed all types of

theological offerings which questioned the miracles, the supernatural in the Bible and the inerrancy and reliability of the entire Bible.

Professor O. W. Heick in his *A History of Christian Thought*, Vol. II, in describing the efforts of Walther to foster a Lutheranism faithful to the Bible and the *Lutheran Confessions* stated about Walther:

His theological labors were marked by a persistent attempt to purge American Lutheranism of all alien principles and to restore the theology of the Reformation and post-Reformation period. The theological controversies centered mainly about the five following problems: (1) the doctrine of the Church and ministry; (2) open questions; (3) eschatology; (4) Sunday observance; (5) predestination. (p. 458)

An honest reading of Walther's writings will show that the stance of today's Missouri Synod "moderates" is not that of Walther and the founding fathers of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Dr. Raymond F. Surburg
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

Affirm

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

All correspondence, editorial material, contributions, and communications about subscriptions should be addressed to:

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c/o Walther Memorial Lutheran Church
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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216

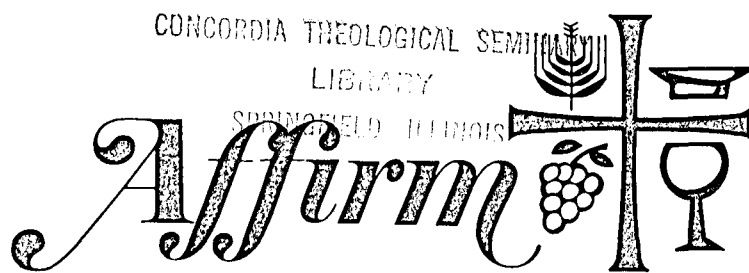
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MAR 15 1974

V, 3

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

#9
At the recent first meeting of the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Conciliation Dr. Preus eloquently spoke of the depth of his hope for the Committee's success and for the healing of Missouri's wounds. Responses from the Committee members present revealed a large reservoir of goodwill, genuine commitment to the Committee's task, and a strong sense of the responsibilities the committee has.

What theological issues led to Missouri's current crisis? One knowledgeable group, composed of conservatives and moderates, recently identified four items as major issues:

1. Inspiration and the inerrancy of the Scriptures.
2. The Historical-Critical Method of interpreting the Bible.
3. The relation between Gospel and the entire Scriptures, a controversy also identified as "Gospel reductionism."
4. The third use of the Law in the life of a Christian.

All reports indicate that in dealing with all phases of the crisis Missouri faces, her officials have acted scrupulously according to the provisions of THE HANDBOOK, as Christian gentlemen, motivated both by a love for those who have deviated from Biblical theology and by a firm resolve to act according to the Word of God.

The liberals have made the split seminary a sad reality in Missouri; the front pages they captured in various cities will not, as far as one can see, impress the secular world more strongly with the Lordship of Jesus Christ and His message of forgiving love. Moreover, it will cause the faith of some in the church to waver; possibly even a few may totally fall away from Christ. Whatever our feelings, our sense of regret at the skandalon the church now offers the world, we must seek His forgiveness for our guilt and pledge anew to serve Him as faithfully and lovingly and with as much dedication as we can. It will take years for the dust to settle on this incident and for a sober appraisal of this split to be made. Only then will we more fully appreciate how by grace God led the great bulk of the church to stay faithful to Him and His word. Do pray for our church daily!

Dr. Tietjen has been accused of opening mail addressed to the seminary's Board of Control. Dr. Paul Zimmerman, River Forest, in a public meeting recently explained that this incident involved not only the fact that Dr. Tietjen "opened the envelope, but in January, 1971 when President Preus wrote to the Board of Control in answer to certain points about the Fact Finding Committee, President Tietjen took that letter to his faculty and there was a statement, an answer to it — not just an answer to him privately, but publicly, which was printed publicly, eventually in the LUTHERAN WITNESS, and which attacked him (Preus) as un-Lutheran, and adopting an entirely unChristian procedure. Now that was in answer to a letter addressed to the Board of Control. The Board of Control met two weeks later and was confronted with an accomplished fact. This is what is referred to. That's also found in the documentation."

AFFIRM urges all its readers to write the President of the church, Dr J. A. O. Preus, the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 500 North Broadway, St. Louis, Missouri 63102, to reaffirm their support of Missouri's stand on the doctrine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Word of God. Whether or not Missouri's prexy has the staff to answer thousands of letters and whether or not he personally is able to read each of them in all its detail, isn't as important as the fact that the mail on these issues most likely gets sorted into two stacks — one supporting Missouri's Biblical stand, the other supporting the stand of its liberal-leaning members. It's heartening for the President of a church body to have eight inches of mail in support of his policies and only an inch stack on behalf of the opposition.

The Historical-Critical Method of interpreting the Bible starts with the assumption that the Bible's appearances are deceiving. The Book isn't what it seems to be. For instance, Moses didn't write what Jesus said Moses wrote; several other men wrote those pages. In fact, Genesis (and most of the Bible) is hodge-podge; it's like a scrambled radio signal we have to try to unscramble, because the Bible isn't at all reliable; e.g., someone piously dreamed up Adam and Eve; others included in their writings legends like the flood and the Virgin birth. It requires some rather smart scholars, these critics state, to poke around in the Biblical text and successfully discover who wrote about what, what's true, and what's false. Guess who those rather smart scholars are? Yes, you're right! Guess who vouches for them? Right again! They have a tight trade association and, though they differ with each other on some matters, they mutually admire each other and wouldn't even notice such hoi polloi opinions as those of the average parish pastor.

There's been a lot of talk about "a deal" with which Dr. Preus supposedly hoped to solve the Sem problem. Dr. Zimmerman explained in a meeting, "Two District presidents. . . came to him and said, 'What can we do to get Dr. Tietjen out of this difficulty?' And Dr. Preus said, 'No deal,' and he tells me he used exactly that terminology. He said, 'If you want to do anything . . . you must go to the Board of Control.' They approached the Board of Control, and the Board of Control chairman replied . . . that if they got very far into the proceedings (with respect to Dr. Tietjen), 'We will not be able to back off.' And I have that from the chairman. The question was, 'Will you hound him into the districts, if we provide a call so he'll have a chance for a new start somewhere else,' and the answer was, 'If he

receives a call into the districts, if he somehow comes out of our jurisdiction, he then goes under the jurisdiction of the district president.' Now it is in that context that, I think, one has to look at the entire thing."

With this issue AFFIRM begins a new policy of briefly summarizing events in the history of the church and interpreting them. At the moment AFFIRM'S plans call for the publication of a newsletter like this between its regular issues and for as long as events apparently require this kind of coverage. It also plans to devote several pages of its regular monthly issue to news and interpretation. Please share your comments with the editors!

At press time the seminary-in-opposition has become a reality. Though its members and supporters may regard it a seminary-in-exile, it is much more than that. It stands opposed to the will of the church expressed in New Orleans and later through the St. Louis Board of Control, carrying our synod's decisions. It might be asked whether a group of men can or wish to establish a new seminary without founding a new church.

Indications are that a qualified professional teaching staff will offer the Sem's students during the quarter which has just started a rich and full curriculum and that the school will settle down to its traditional and productive routines.

Many on both sides of the struggle object for various reasons to the terms commonly used to designate the two forces which array themselves against each other in Missouri — liberals or moderates and conservatives. Someone recently suggested a term which may focus, better than any other, on the nub of the problem. He saw Missouri's difficulties as a struggle between Bible believers and Bible doubters. It's the kind of telling phrasing which may well get wide usage.

Liberals and their followers in recent months have repeatedly pointed out that Dr. J. A. O. Preus is the president of the whole synod; they specifically state that he is the liberals' as well as the conservatives' president within Missouri. They are right. However, if the president of our church body is to serve the church as he should, as he has been called on by God to serve it, he must use his office to exercise church discipline — with love and firmness — in such a way that he is God's agent to preserve the purity of doctrine in Missouri. This can only be interpreted to mean that he is indeed president of the liberals as long as he can reasonably hope to lead them back to the confessional theology of the Bible. When they have shown that Missouri cannot hope for their return to Biblical teaching, Missouri must disavow them as its members and the president must, however regretfully, then of necessity terminate his presidency with respect to them. A Missouri president who permanently presides over liberals is a contradiction in terms.

Some conservatives mistakenly interpret the signals of reconciliation they hear coming from Missouri's headquarters as a weakening of faithfulness to the Gospel of the love to be found in Christ Jesus, Lord and Redeemer of the world, to God's Word, and His truths. This is not true. But all of us should pray that every God-pleasing effort at reconciliation be made to end the strife within the church. Only when those efforts have clearly failed, should the final and decisive separation take place.

Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

Contributions

With their generous support many of its friends have made the publication of *Affirm* possible.

You also can help defray its cost by contributing in any amount to:

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The Gut Issues

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

THE St. Louis Seminary problem is admittedly complex and has many ramifications. That it is confusing to the average layman is not surprising.

But isn't it possible, one asks, to get the problem down to where an ordinary Lutheran Christian can understand it? What really are the "gut" issues? These are fair questions. At the risk of over-simplification, let's put our finger on two basic elements.

The first gut issue is doctrinal, specifically a method of Bible interpretation that previously had been foreign to our synod for better than a century. It is called the Historical-Critical Method.

Disregarding the unique character of the Bible as the Word of God, this method assumes (note the assumption!) that between Jesus' ministry, approximately 27 to 30 A.D., and the writing of the Gospel accounts some 30 years later by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the early Christian church glamorized events in Jesus' ministry, added to them, if you will. Fiction, if you insist.

This method of Bible interpretation further assumes (note a second assumption!) that the Gospel writers also probably further altered the report of the original event.

This means, for example, that the John 4 account of Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well in the village of Sychar may not have taken place at all. The whole story may have been an invention of (a) the early church and (b) the Apostle John. Therefore a Bible student, according to this method, must peel back the assumed additions to get at the so-called "kernel of truth." Depending on the subjective whim of the peeler one could, of course, come up with various kernels, such as the "truth" that Jesus was not a racist.

THIS approach to Scripture is not new. It came out of a rationalistic approach to the Bible by theologians in Germany. It was presented to students at the St. Louis Seminary at least 35 years ago, but only to show its dangers to our Christian faith if carried to its logical and theological conclusions.

What are some of the dangers? Downgrading the uniqueness of the Bible, it either eliminates the miraculous in Scripture or reduces miracles to a minimum. It strikes at both the inerrancy and the authority of the Bible. If the assumptions are granted that both the early church and the writers added to an original event in Jesus' ministry, then one must be a scholar to read the Bible. He cannot take it as it reads, but must have a knowledge of the assumed method of transmission by which it came to us.

Once the principle of tampering with the text is allowed, the objective truth of Scripture is gone. If it is possible that John 4 did not happen, then on principle one must allow that possibly the Resurrection of Jesus did not happen either. But read what

the Apostle Paul says in 1 Cor. 15 about that! "If Christ be not raised, your faith is in vain, etc."

When one asks whence such a method of Bible interpretation came, the feeling is inescapable that it is created by an intellectual arrogance which finds the Bible too simple. To take it as it stands is not a sufficient challenge to the "high scholarship" and nimble minds of some theologians. Simply to teach the Bible stories about Jesus may be all right for Sunday school teachers and their tiny tots, but certainly not for scholars!

THERE is no doubt that the method of Biblical interpretation of one basic problem at St. Louis, and it is one which has been 10 to 15 years growing to its present proportions.

A second gut issue at St. Louis is one of administration. Over a period of some years, the seminary community gradually has isolated itself from the church. In its ivory tower it had become pretty much of a law unto itself. To be sure, rumblings have been heard for some years, but these were usually brushed aside as "talking past each other."

But the growing uneasiness continued, especially as young seminary graduates, tutored in the Historical-Critical Method, began filling Missouri Synod pulpits. Laymen asked with increasing frequency, "What's going on down there at our seminary?"

And thus the administrative question came to the fore. Just whose seminary is it? At New Orleans the synod spoke loud and clear. *It said that Synod built the school, that Synod owns the school, that Synod spends better than \$1 million a year supporting that school, and therefore Synod has a right to say what is going to be taught at that school.*

The rest is history or history in the making. The seminary president, under most serious indictment by Synod at the New Orleans Convention, was temporarily suspended by the school's Board of Control until the charges could be evaluated and a decision reached. Immediately, a sympathetic student body majority walked out of the classrooms, followed by a faculty majority which no longer was willing to be a servant of the Church.

A new faculty, in harmony with Synod's doctrinal position, is being built. A new student body, added to the faithful one-third that remained of the old, will come forth from the homes of the 2.8 million folks who comprise our synod. If it please God, both students and faculty will be the sort of men who say humbly, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

For a time we shall have less quantity, but better quality. It is worth remembering that the seminary started in Perry County, Missouri, with one faculty member and four students. But they were quality folks, and God did great things with them. He will do so again.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

Volume III, No. 10
March 15, 1974

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#10

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

On The News Front

INTERVIEWED on March 6, Dr. Martin Scharlemann, Acting President of our St. Louis Sem, said, "Concordia Seminary opened its spring quarter on March 4 with a registration of a total of 83 at this point . . . We will probably have around 90. The whole mood of the campus is different. Students who used to be submerged in a flood of ideological propaganda can now speak and be heard. It is marvelous to see the students blossoming out in solid, theological discussion. They are in good spirits. We are planning various social and athletic events to become better acquainted. We hope to present the church with a new kind of responsible pastor.

"The cooperation from Springfield with us has been remarkable. We are using four of their professors to help put on courses here and working together on the assignment of vicars and the placement of candidates.

"One of the rewarding aspects of this experience has been the overwhelming interest and willingness on the part of competent people to help us in putting on the required courses. As much as possible, these are men from the local area, but we have also engaged, for instance, Dr. Hummel from Indiana and Dr. Robert Hoerber, Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri. We are getting quite a few staff people from 500 North Broadway to do courses. For example, they will participate in a required course which never existed before, Know Your Church.

"A mood of optimism prevails on the campus."

ONE'S heart goes out to the students at the St. Louis Sem in opposition. Admittedly, their actions have sometimes lacked both good judgment and a sense of responsibility. But they are caught in the crunch. In vital matters they have been uninformed; often they have been misinformed. Acting President Dr. Scharlemann has been using every possible avenue to supply correct information. For example, during the last week in February he issued a letter to all second year students informing them that soon the certification process must begin for vicarage placement. Every second year student was supplied with an application blank by which he could indicate his desire to receive such an assignment. He was reminded that a year of vicarage service is part of the academic program leading to qualification for the ministry in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and that his vicarage program is under the supervision of Concordia Seminary, 801 De Mun Ave., St. Louis, Mo. Synod's vicarage program is of benefit to the students, to parishes, and to pastors. Hopefully this fine program will not be unduly disturbed in these difficult days.

Chronology of Sem Events

Sunday, January 20 Acting on charges lodged against Dr. Tietjen by two pastors, the Board of Control suspended Dr. Tietjen (a temporary action) because of the gravity of the charges. This was in accord with synodical bylaw 6.79 which gives the lengthy procedure for evaluation of charges by (a) the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, (b) the faculty hearings committee, and (c) the Board of Control.

Monday, January 21 Students failed to attend classes and issued a statement that they would not return until all faculty members were cleared or found guilty. They did this despite the fact that the Board of Control had received no charges against any specific faculty member except Dr. Tietjen. When the students voted on their statement, 274 voted for, 92 voted against, 15 abstained.

Tuesday, January 22 Disregarding 92 students who wanted to get on with their theological training, the faculty majority walked out without notifying the Board of Control of its intentions. The faculty majority issued a statement saying it considered itself under the same suspension as Dr. Tietjen.

February 1 The faculty majority drew pay for January 19 to February 1 though its members did not teach during that period.

February 12 The faculty majority issued an ultimatum to the Board of Control stating that it would resume teaching on February 19 only if four conditions were met by the Board: reinstatement of Dr. Tietjen, reinstatement of former department heads, renewal of Prof. Goetting's contract, reversal of the retirement policy.

On the News Front:

February 15 The Board of Control chairman, upon legal advice, ordered the February 15 paychecks held until the Board of Control could make a decision at its February 17-18 meeting.

February 17-18 The Board of Control meeting. The Board validated the chairman's action on the paychecks. Faced with the faculty majority ultimatum of February 12, the Board directed the faculty to resume teaching on February 19 or be found in breach of contract with no further salary and free house. Faculty members were given a month and 10 days (to March 31) to accomplish the move.

◆ ◆ ◆

Dr. E. H. Zimmermann, the President of Missouri's Indiana District, commented about the progress now gaining momentum at our Sem,

"I am grateful, however, that as many as 18 competent men could be located at short notice to take over the teaching load for the spring quarter and that all required and many elective courses can be offered. I am particularly pleased that more than 80 young men are anxious to complete their training for the ministry of the LC-MS. Both should be supported wholeheartedly by the Synod and all efforts should be made to carry out effective recruitment programs at every possible level, so that both seminaries can continue their important role in the church."

◆ ◆ ◆

Dr. Henry J. Eggold, Acting President of our Springfield Seminary, recently assessed the stance of that school and its role in Missouri's current troubles.

"In assessing the role of our Springfield Seminary in the present crisis of our Church, we are following three guiding principles: 1) that the Board of Control of the St. Louis Seminary is directly responsible for dealing with the situation there; 2) that constituted authorities in the Synod are following the provisions of the Handbook in attempting to resolve the problems at St. Louis; 3) that our Springfield seminary is serving the Synod and that we can do that best by performing our tasks of teaching and learning, and by remembering our Church in our prayers.

"When we were approached to provide part-time instructors for the St. Louis Seminary, our Board of Control, after prior consultation with the Board for Higher Education, passed the following resolution; 'That, consistent with our past practice, we permit professors of the Springfield seminary to teach at the St. Louis seminary and that the Acting President is to discuss with each professor the extent of his participation in the St. Louis program in view of his teaching load at our seminary.'

"With our whole Church, we grieve over the present division in our beloved Synod.

"At the same time, we rejoice over recent efforts at reconciliation. Dr. Preus has appointed an Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Conciliation. In addition, the executive committee of the Board of Directors of the Synod has assumed a mediating role. Under their guidance, the mission staff and the Board for Missions have resolved to discuss their differences together.

"Upon these and every other effort to achieve a God-pleasing unity, we implore the blessing and guidance of the Holy Spirit."

◆ ◆ ◆

AT a very successful seminary rally in St. Louis several weeks ago, President J. A. O. Preus said,

"The people of the Synod love God's Word and want to be faithful to it; they love their Synod and want it to remain together; they want to get on with the mission of the church. I am confident we will emerge from this conflict a stronger, more united and more aggressive church in carrying out Christ's mission."

◆ ◆ ◆

IT is because we love our church (small "c") so dearly that we bleed as we do during the present controversy. We know that whatever Missouri's future, the Church (capital "C") will endure. This is our Lord's promise. But we love the church that has led us into the Kingdom and we want her heritage preserved for our children.

Is there an encouraging word? and can we find a real unity in the prophetic and apostolic Scripture with its beautiful message of the redeeming love of God in Jesus Christ?

On the News Front:

It will not be easy. It will demand discussions that go beyond the procedural, political, and personality questions to the real issues of doctrine. The issues are substantive. They involve the whole area of Scriptural authority and the meaning of Confessional subscription.

Following the great Reformer's death, the Lutheran church went through three decades of internal strife that culminated in the formulation and adoption of the Formula of Concord and the publication of the Book of Concord. As a result, a great number of Christian people found and expressed unanimity and the church found a new strength for her mission.

We can confidently pray God it will happen again—and we can do it in the knowledge that even in Missouri's critical hour most of her laity and clergy and many of her leaders are committed to her doctrinal heritage!

The Reverend Karl L. Barth, President
South Wisconsin District, LC-MS



ONE of the most important doctrinal issues facing our church today is the relationship between Gospel and Scripture. In question form the issues might be stated this way, "Is the Bible God's inspired and authoritative Word on all matters concerning which it speaks or can we permit ourselves freedom on those matters that are not explicitly part of the Gospel?"

The latter view is sometimes described as "Gospel reductionism." What is binding doctrine is narrowed or reduced to that which touches the Gospel. To give a few examples, Gospel reductionism approaches the Virgin Birth, the miracles of Jesus, the doctrine of original sin or the question of the ordination of women not by asking, "Does the Bible teach clearly on this matter?" but "What does my position on these matters do to the Gospel?"

Synod has affirmed its belief that "Gospel reductionism" diminishes the authority of the Scriptures.



WHAT role should confessions rightly have in the stance of the church? In a 1971 address at a Concordia Historical Institute meeting, *Missouri's Dilemma: Confessional and Constitutional Concerns*, August R. Suelflow included a quotation from Edmund Schlink which can be found in his *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions* (Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia 1961) on p. 31,

"To be bound by the Confession necessarily implies for dogmatics the obligation to continue in the act of confession; for the consensus of the church in the doctrine of the Gospel is and remains until Christ's return a dissensus from the world. A dogmatics that would in an unrelated manner consider only those heresies through which the devil assailed the church centuries ago, but would not be alert to the constantly changing disguises of the devil's destructive purpose in the invention of ever-new attacks of the evil powers under ever-new and surprising forms—such a dogmatics would imperceptibly but helplessly fall prey to the attitudes and attacks of this world. Contrary to the Confession is that dogmatics which does not teach the Gospel as witnessed by the Confessions in demarcation against newly arising heresies. *Even the most solemn reaffirmation of the Confessions may be a denial of them, if the errors of the day are passed over in silence.* Hence, no Confession of the church may be regarded as definite in the sense of precluding the possibility of further Confessions. *All the Confessions had their origin in confrontation with errors—this fact is inherent in the very concept of a Confession,* as the Confessions themselves and particularly the programmatic introduction to the Formula of Concord expressly declare—and to admit this is to acknowledge that the Book of Concord cannot be regarded as the final and conclusive Confession. *At the very least the church, confronted with new heresies, will have to furnish up-to-date and binding interpretations of her official Confessions.* Also beyond this we must soberly reckon with the possibility, perhaps even the necessity, of meeting the invasion of new errors with the formulation and validation of new Confessions." (*Italics added*)

Is It Confessional To Use ‘A Statement’

A report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, issued in November 1973 asserts that it is proper for synodical agencies and congregations to ask pastors, teachers, and professors who are being called how they stand in regard to *A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles*. Many objections have been raised against the use of *A Statement* as a new judge or standard of confessional position and orthodoxy of the church's full time servants. Some hold that this request is therefore unconstitutional. Others say that the Missouri Synod is adding to the confessions and thus in effect adding to its constitution. Perhaps some of the following questions and answers can speak to the problems.

1) MAY A CONGREGATION IN CALLING A PASTOR ASK HOW HE STANDS IN REGARD TO 'A STATEMENT'?

The minimum that a congregation in the Missouri Synod has always had to ask of its possible pastor-elect is how he stands over against the Bible and what place the Lutheran Confessions have in his theological position. This does not mean that congregations have not had the right to ask other questions of its pastors-elect. For example, if a congregation has just undergone a difficulty with the Masonic problem, it has every right to ask its pastor-elect for a prior commitment on how he stands on this issue. Even if *A Statement* had not become an official statement of the Missouri Synod's position, a congregation could ask its pastor-elect how he stood on the matter because the document spoke to needs which the congregation had. Some congregations now have ascertained ahead of time how their pastors-elect stood on the *Mission Affirmations*. This is definitely also a type of confessional commitment.

2) ISN'T THE QUESTION OF HOW A PASTOR-ELECT OR CANDIDATE FOR THE HOLY MINISTRY STANDS ON 'A STATEMENT' OR ANY OTHER DOCUMENT AN ABRIDGEMENT OF HIS FREEDOM UNDER THE GOSPEL?

Confessional subscription of the pastor at the time of ordination or installation is not for the pastor's benefit but for the congregation's. The congregation has every right and should exercise this right to ask what the pastor believes before he enters into his office. Public officials are required to give a similar public allegiance to the constitution. If there should be any doubt how the pastor stands in regard to his confessional subscription, he should at any time and at any place be ready immediately to repeat his commitment. This is not a legalistic burden, but an evangelical opportunity. Every Sunday at church and, yes, every day Christians repeat the faith of their Baptism when they confess the Apostles Creed. Paul, Peter and the Holy Apostles were ready to make a confession of their faith many times. Paul told Timothy to do the same.

3) ISN'T COMMITMENT TO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES AND THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS ENOUGH?

The church does not add confessions for the sake of adding, but to answer new and different problems. Some times new confessions are an absolute necessity because of a new crisis in the church. Jesus asked Peter for a confessional commitment. Peter did not say to Jesus, "You cannot ask me for a new confessional commitment because this is abridgement of my academic or Gospel freedom. I swear only to the Old Testament confession. 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.' " Peter was quite happy to say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." We should be willing to face new situations with fresh confessional courage.

4) SHOULDN'T WE
AGREE ON NEW CONF
SECT AND ADOPT 'A S

In a time of crisis when the church has been raised, the church ought to give a testimony of his faith for consensus. Jesus gave the Apostles and Pilate without asking. Luther did the same at the Augsburg Confession in 1530. Their own constituencies of opinion. This was a confession it. At the New Orleans a similar situation existed in the advantage of having the doctrine of ratification. The Lutheran (1537) did not even have a

5) ISN'T THERE A
SPECIFIC COMMITMENT
ONLY THOSE ENTER
PASTORS ALREADY IN

Not at all! The faith of all who found themselves even before the *Augsburg* selfunderstood, after it was agreement with it. Any con pastor-elect would ask ho sion. Today a congregation for his opinion on *A State*

6) ARE PASTORS
SYNOD—PROFESSORS
PRESIDENTS AND V.
SECRETARIES—BOUND

Synod is the confessional
 Certain persons serve the
 Unless these persons make
 all the members of Synod m
 the congregations through
 fessional positions.

7) CAN 'A STATEMEN

Only the Holy Scripture without error, they cannot. Any human document can err. It is the obligation of its pastors, to see if they subscribe to the Lutheran (they do not err doctrinally) towards *A Statement* to see no valid reason for not making it, a confession.

8) SOME CLAIM THAT
ENOUGH OR SUFFICIENT
WHAT ABOUT ITS STATE

No confessional statement
Did the men who prepare
problems that the Lutheran
course, not! Some areas, li

(Continued)

Confessional . . .

(Continued from Page 5)

have to be handled in *A Statement* because they are handled in the Lutheran Confessions of the 16th century. Anyone who accepts *A Statement* is by that reendorsing his commitment to the Lutheran Confessions. *A Statement* handles problems that we are facing in our church at this time. Each individual must answer for himself whether the answers to these problems can be his answers. This is what confessional subscription means.

9) WHEN DOES ANY STATEMENT OR DOCUMENT BECOME CONFESSIONALLY BINDING ON AN INDIVIDUAL? DO WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR SOME TYPE OF JOINT CHURCH ACTION?

Luther was quite willing to stand before God's judgment throne on the basis of what he preached and wrote. Every Christian pastor should have the same confidence. If he does not have this confidence, he should not be a pastor. The salvation of the people committed to the care of pastors is too precious to stake it on pastors who have no confidence in what they preach and teach. Just as the apostles were precious to Jesus, so our congregations should be precious to our pastors.

10) WILL 'A STATEMENT' BECOME BINDING AS LONG AS THE INSTITUTION OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD EXISTS?

Nobody knows the answer to this question for sure. Luther and Melancthon wrote many documents. They did not know that the church in their day and ours would make them 'official' statements of faith, but their writings were first of all their own confessions on which they were willing to be held accountable by God. Some of Luther's documents became public confession, like the Small Catechism. Others were used for a short period of time only. These were not found in error, but their ideas were incorporated in other documents. It is too early to predict the fate of 'A Statement'. It could stand as is or be revised or be incorporated into another document. Regardless of what happens to it, it is a confessional response of the church today to many of its problems, like the actual history of Jesus, His miracles, and many other issues. Those who have subscribed to it hold that it is a proper reflection of the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures as it has been attested in the faith of the ancient and catholic church, the church of Luther's theology, and the founders of the Missouri Synod. They also are willing to stand before God with this confession. This is what confessional subscription really means.

11) SOME CONGREGATIONS HAVE ENDORSED 'A STATEMENT' WITHOUT READING IT AND SOME PASTORS HAVE REJECTED IT BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT READ IT OR NOT UNDERSTOOD IT. WHAT DO WE SAY ABOUT THIS?

It is wrong to believe something simply because the church says we should. But there is no excuse for not reading it. Are we going to claim illiteracy? If there are problems with *A Statement* or any other document which the church has endorsed as an expression of its faith we should have the intellectual honesty to tell people about it. It is immoral to endorse or oppose any confessional statement which we have not read or understood. If we refuse to read it, the fault however lies with us. It is also less than honest to say that we oppose something or someone without indicating precisely and exactly what we oppose.

12) IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS ISN'T ANY TYPE OF ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTION BEYOND THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS AGAINST THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS THEMSELVES AND THE CONSTITUTION OF OUR SYNOD?

Never did Moses, the prophets, Jesus, the apostles, the fathers of Nicea, Constantinople, Chalcedon, Augsburg, Smalcald or the framers of Synod's constitution entertain the foolish idea that they were the last possible confessors on earth. In fact, we only follow in their footsteps when we continue to confess. When we stop confessing we are no longer followers of Jesus. They did not ask us to get a majority opinion because like true saints they were more often found in the minority than in the majority. It is more Catholic than anything else to wait for a council of the whole church, or a convention of the Lutheran World Federation or of the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. or even a convention of the Missouri Synod to be called and to act before we confess our faith. The Missouri Synod did confess its faith at New Orleans and we can be grateful that there was sufficient confessional strength to do so. But much more courageous were those who before New Orleans confessed it when it was not the popular or desirable thing to do. A congregation which requires a commitment on *A Statement* is following in this great confessional tradition which dates back to Jesus Himself.

13) CAN DISTRICT PRESIDENTS REFUSE TO PROCESS CALLS WHICH REQUIRE SOME TYPE OF COMMITMENT TO 'A STATEMENT'?

Maybe the opposite question has to be asked, "Can they process calls which don't require it?" In processing calls for congregations asking for candidates from the seminaries they are the servants of the congregations and not their lords and bishops (Augustana XXVIII). They can not and may not force a man on a congregation who does not hold to the stated doctrinal position of that congregation. This was one the vital issues of the Lutheran Reformation. District Presidents in the Missouri Synod are not like bishops in the Episcopal Church who have the right to assign priests. Where they do it as in the case of the first calls to candidates, they do it by human right and not divine right. No human ordinance, civil or synodical or ecclesiastical removes, this right.

David P. Scaer, Th. D.
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Editorial Policy

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Bible Believers Versus Bible Doubters

THE liberal elements within our church (including ELIM, Tietjen and the liberal majority of the St. Louis Seminary faculty) have been charging that the suspension of Tietjen and retirement of the older professors stemmed from political reasons and that these men are faithful to the doctrines of the Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and Article II of Synod's Constitution. Their own pens demonstrate that this is not true, that the issue is basically doctrinal, and that they themselves know this.

1. DR. ROLAND WIEDERAENDERS reported to the Council of Presidents and seminary faculties on Dec. 2, 1963:

Despite repeated efforts we have not dealt honestly with our pastors and people. We have refused to state our changing theological position in open, honest, forthright, simple and clear words. *Over and over again we said that nothing was changing when all the while we were aware of changes taking place.* Either we should have informed our pastors and people that changes were taking place and, if possible, convinced them from Scripture that these changes were in full harmony with "This saith the Lord!" or we should have stopped playing games as we gave assurance that no changes were taking place. With increasing measure the synodical trumpet has been given an uncertain sound. (*Italics added*)

2. DR. HERBERT T. MAYER, in a "Concordia Theological Monthly" editorial, Sept. 1969 said of "the theological issues which trouble the Synod:"

It seems to us that the Denver convention underlined at least three key issues: the doctrine of the Word, the nature of the mission of the people of God, and the quest for fellowship.

1. One group apparently believes that the inerrancy of Scripture must be defined to mean that no discrepancy or contradiction can be found in Scripture. Or, they maintain that it must be defined in terms of the concept of 'propositional truth,' which seems to mean that every statement in Scripture must conform to reality (geographical, historical, scientific), unless there is clear indication to the contrary in the passage itself.

Another group feels that this double-barreled definition adds a test of truthfulness to Scripture which Scripture nowhere applies to itself. They prefer to define inerrancy to mean that Scripture infallibly accomplishes God's purposes and is, in this sense, wholly reliable, true and trustworthy . . .

2. Two views also prevail in the Synod on the question of the church's mission . . . One group apparently understands these affirmations (The Mission Affirmations of 1965) to be primarily a call to increase our efforts to preach the Gospel to every creature, while the other group understands them as a call to engage in vigorous ministry of Gospel preaching and social action.

3. One group in the Synod views fellowship as a gift whose value is to be preserved by a strict and limited approach to the question of who our brothers are . . . The other group seeks every permissible opportunity to rejoice in our fellowship with all who confess Jesus Christ as Lord so that Christians can strengthen each other . . .

3. MARTIN L. KRETZMANN, in an article "What on Earth Does the Gospel Change?" in the Lutheran World Federation publication, *Lutheran World*, XVI, 4 (1969), says:

There are a great many doctrines in the church's library . . . unfortunately, they are also often witness to the extent to which theologians have forgotten the gospel and forged systems of doctrine which prevent men from hearing the gospel. We are thus offered a great many propositions, ranging from a specific doctrine of creation to the condition of man's soul after death which we are asked to believe, as if we were saved by doctrine instead of by grace . . .

One must ask oneself, for example, what would happen to a 'doctrine' of the place of women in the church, or a literalistic doctrine of creation, or some particular doctrines of the inspiration of scripture, or explicit explanations of the mystery of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, or a doctrine of church order, or of church government, or a host of others, if we would put them to the test of the question, 'What has this to do with the gospel?' Would we not quickly see that they have no essential connection with the gospel and therefore find ourselves able to live with many divergent formulations of doctrine in our common understanding of, and commitment to, the centrality of the gospel? . . .

It must be admitted, if it is not already clear, that this paper is written from a particular perspective for which no apology is made. It is the perspective of one who has been forced into an agonizing reexamination of everything he has learned in the light of the gospel and who believes that we must start with the basic assumption that what hinders the course of the gospel must be wrong and what furthers it is right . . .

This is an earnest plea for an open and open-ended theology . . . There may be much orthodoxy which is really heretical because it serves no other purpose than being an historical landmark showing where the church once camped on its pilgrimage. (*Italics added*)

4. JOHN TIETJEN, in his response to the Fact Finding Report, shows that his theology and that of the faculty majority is different from and at variance with Synod's doctrine, when he says that the theology of the Fact Finding Report is "a theology less than Lutheran," . . . "is unLutheran," is "both unscriptural and unconfessional," and

The point rather is this: the really hazardous theological "difference" is the one between the biblical, confessional Gospel as it was affirmed by our faculty in the interviews and the sub-biblical, sub-confessional theology underlying the report of the president's committee.

And again, Tietjen, addressing the Council of Presidents of Synod on Sept. 2, 1972, said: "There are two theologies in the Synod. There are controverted doctrines in the Synod."

5. PAUL G. BRETSCHER, in a letter "To my Fellow Delegates of the Indiana District, Convention of the LC-MS, New Orleans" dated July, 1973, said:

Critical study of the Scriptures, as you know, raises a sharp conflict with our traditional understanding of the Bible's inspiration. In any such conflict, something finally has to give. Either the critical approach to Scripture is wrong, or

(Continued on Page 8)

Bible . . .

(Continued from Page 7)

something is faulty in our traditional understanding of inspiration . . . Thus I press the alternative possibility, namely, that the root fault of our conflict lies in certain aspects of our traditional understanding and application of the doctrine of the Bible's inspiration . . .

Yet it is Lutheran to recognize that the tradition of any church, including our own, is subject to error . . .

Our very tradition may be a 'trap' from which our living Lord yearns to set us free . . .

Critical study clashes with our tradition. The CTCR says the issue is critical study. The Seminary says the issue is our tradition. (Italics added)

And Bretscher, speaking on the floor of the New Orleans Convention, said: "*Critical study has brought us in conflict with our tradition.*"

6. PROFESSORS WALTER E. KELLER, KENNETH F. KORBY, ROBERT C. SCHULTZ, AND DAVID G. TRUEMPER, in "A Review Essay of 'A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles,'" in the *Cresset*, October, 1973, say:

The thesis that all Scripture is inspired by God (in *A Statement*) becomes the basis for a chain of inferences: . . . That this teaching corresponds to a traditional interpretation of Scripture in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is beyond question. But whether this traditional interpretation can bear the scrutiny of the very Scripture which it presumes to be describing is highly questionable . . . And any tradition, even one 375 years old, may be examined and revised without disloyalty either to the Scripture or the Lutheran Confessions.

7. ELWYN EWALD, Executive Secretary of ELIM, said the following, as taken from a "transcription of a tape recording of an Address at Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Ill., Feb. 7, 1974:"

Though we still continue to operate under one umbrella (within our Missouri Synod), *I think in all honesty there are two theologies as such extant in our church today*—one a theology of legalism, an interpretation of the Scripture that demands explicit particular exegesis of every section of the Scripture . . . The other theology is a theology which

we consider to be a theology of the Gospel, which starts from the cross . . . (Italics added)

THESE are just a few of the more candid statements of liberal theologians in the LC-MS, which correctly though they may in some cases state the conservative case, demonstrate that the liberal doctrine is in conflict with and is opposed to Article II of the Constitution of Synod and to the doctrine which Synod has always espoused. The statements above are also in direct contradiction to the ELIM claim, which is also the claim of the liberal professors, that "We accept without reservation the Sacred Scriptures as the written Word of God and the historic Lutheran confessions named in Article II of our Synod's constitution as a true exposition of that Word." The statements quoted above show clearly that they can make such claims only if they are permitted to interpret the Scriptures and the Confessions differently than they have ever been understood by the church before. Make no mistake about it: *there are two different theologies—that which believes the Bible and that which doubts the Bible; that which wants to hand on the historic Christian faith as it has been received, and that which wants to change it into something else.*

The Rev. Marcus Lang, Pastor
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Affirm

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

All correspondence, editorial material, contributions, and communications about subscriptions should be addressed to:

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4040 West Fond du Lac Avenue
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Volume IV, No. 1
April 1, 1974

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

THE big news momentarily is that a five-day discussion of vicar assignments in the Council of Presidents led to a unanimous decision which would not have recognized the Seminex as qualifying vicarage students. The qualifying test decided on was five quarters of academic work at the regular St. Louis Sem with vicarage supervision carried out by the Board for Higher Education, a departure from normal procedures. It could have been a workable arrangement, which wouldn't have compromised Missouri's position, but in one hour the Seminex students officially disposed of the whole business by voting to reject the arrangement. Sooner or later our officialdom will finally recognize that what Missouri has on its hands is the defiance of a solid core group which apparently likes neither Missouri's Biblical doctrines nor its orderly procedures. What the outcome of this student action will be no one can now foresee, but in the end each student will have to make his own decision about accepting or rejecting these assignments.

April will provide an even bigger test of the future; this same group of officials must tackle the question of calls to students graduating at the end of the school year.

♦ ♦ ♦

ROBERT Jewett on *Concordia and Fanaticism* in the March 27th issue of *The Christian Century* offers prime evidence of the kind of biased reporting which attacks those faithful to God's Word. In addition to the astonishing cover title given this article, *The Century* offers the even more astonishing title on its inside pages, *The Gospel as Heresy* (as though conservatives damned the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ) and, in a large print summary of the article, just under this heading, makes even more astounding statements, "The Concordia conflict has parallels with the Watergate affair, including the absence of due process (imagine!—Ed.) and the kind of zealotry which leads to the misuse of political power."

Because most of *Affirm's* readers don't see *The Century* and because conservatives have repeatedly complained concerning this kind of press, one more quotation about conservative psychology seems worth recording, "The yearning for absolute purity and certainty breeds a peculiar delight in the expulsion of heretics, and uncompromising zeal tends to magnify the virtue of one's own position, to stereotype the opponent as diseased or demonic, to construe education as brainwashing, and to believe in the efficacy of excommunication." Maybe, just maybe, somewhere in Zululand or among Australian aborigines! But try to think of one, just one, conservative Missourian who really fits this horrendous description of Jewett! At best, it's a mere caricature.

♦ ♦ ♦

ENHEARTENING news comes from across the country. *Affirm* appreciates all the notices of rallies and all the DCP bulletins it gets, all the announcements of speeches made for the conservative cause, and all the conservative organizing taking place around the country. Missouri's laity is getting stirred up by the threat that it may soon lose its theology. No doubt the hand of God is at work in Missouri's midst; no doubt a great blessing will come of all this activity on behalf of our Lord's Gospel teaching and His Word. Thanks for all the letters and news items; please do keep *Affirm* informed! Working only part-time at a task which has burgeoned into something much larger than anticipated, what staff *Affirm* has will try to respond to all your letters as soon as possible!

♦ ♦ ♦

A growing number of congregations, areas, and even entire districts, are getting involved in the Doctrinal Concerns Program which started a few years ago in Ohio. From the beginning it aimed at creating an informed laity and clergy and translating conservative convictions into intelligent action at all levels of the church. Chet Swanson, its founder, experienced the liberalization of another church body (in a process parallel to that which Missouri now endures), transferred to Missouri out of deep convictions and concern, only to find himself again in the middle of the same kind of a struggle. He'll be happy to send you information about getting your own DCP group started. Write Chet at 335 Poage Farm Road, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45215; he'll share with you the materials which have been developed.

SOME of the action has shifted to the district level in 1974, the year of district conventions. Because of Synod's rule that a circuit electing its delegates to the next national convention can contain as few as seven congregations though it must have 1,500 communicant members has a right to delegates, a lot of rearranging of these electoral circuits may be going on at the district level this year in order to maximize the number of delegates which, according to *The Handbook*, the district is permitted at the convention. This can be a key struggle with both liberals and conservatives wanting to increase their voting strength at the next national level. *Affirm* hopes that no districts will forfeit conservative strength as the result of inaction.

♦ ♦ ♦

FOLLOWING *Handbook* procedures, the Sem's Board of Control sent to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations the doctrinal charges at issue in the Tietjen matter. The CTCR has returned them for a more precise definition. The Board has reformulated these questions, consulted Pastors Harnapp and Buelow as to the accuracy of the new formulation and now awaits Dr. Tietjen's comments. According to procedures the CTCR must then make a finding on these charges.

♦ ♦ ♦

THE 3-09 resolution of the New Orleans convention quoted one of the Lutheran Confessions (*Formula of Concord*) "Holy Scripture remains the only judged rule, and norm according to which as the only touchstone all doctrines should be understood and judged as good or evil, right or wrong." It points out that the former faculty majority, in its document *Faithful to our Calling*, regard as open, exegetical questions, "the creation account as given in Gen. 1 and 2; the historicity of Adam and Eve as real, historical persons; the Fall as a historical event detailed factually in Gen. 3; miraculous details throughout the Scripture, even events recorded by the evangelists in connection with Christ's life; predictive prophecies in the Old Testament . . ."

It then states, "The fact that Scripture's inerrancy, verbal inspiration, absolutely unique and divine character are also attacked—ever so subtly at first—simply fits the tragic picture of what has gone on elsewhere in the Christian world."

The inerrancy of the Bible is at stake; that's one of the great issues.

♦ ♦ ♦

I N formulating its goals for its district convention this spring, one of the conservative groups has under consideration striving for these:

1. The selection of a youth delegate for the synodical convention so that others than liberal-minded youth will be sent to it.
2. A memorial affirming the constitutionality of the New Orleans resolutions, and the district's willingness to honor and uphold them.
3. A memorial affirming the district's unqualified support of A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles as a "more formal and comprehensive statement of belief" in the sense of Resolution 5-24 of the 1971 Milwaukee convention.
4. A memorial censuring ALC and LCA faculties and other non-Missouri schools for officially endorsing and supporting the doctrinal position and the rebellious actions of the St. Louis Seminary faculty majority.
5. A memorial questioning the extent to which LCUSA should participate in the mission program and the campus ministry of the district.
6. A memorial condemning ELIM as a rebel church within the church and:
 - a) having objectives and purposes contrary to Synod's;
 - b) intimidating and maligning synodical officers;
 - c) threatening lawsuits against the church;
 - d) claiming exemption from obedience to Synod's constitution;
 - e) conducting public demonstrations and using the public press to the embarrassment and offense of faithful LC-MS members and fellow Christians;
 - f) undermining the faith of weaker brethren;
 - g) fostering discord and disunity in the church;
 - h) diverting time and funds from Synod's programs of ministry and mission;
 - i) receiving encouragement from some district presidents who violate their *Handbook* responsibilities to provide faithful supervision of the doctrine and practice of their pastors and congregations.
7. A memorial supporting the CTCR on the use of A Statement.

April 1, 1974

C HET Swanson, Chairman of the Balance, Inc. Finance Committee, which publishes *Affirm*, noted that at the annual meeting in February, Balance was "in the black" but it would need a lot more help were it to stay that way and carry out its modest program. He said, "To all who have given financial and prayer support we express our deep appreciation. To this we must add our heartfelt thanks to the tremendous donations of time and talent . . . invaluable to our total effort . . . Much expense of travel, telephoning, mailing, and other costs to support the work of Balance and to help support our DCP effort . . . are borne by officers, trustees, and 'friends' of Balance . . . So thank you all for your time, your talent, your treasure—and your prayers. Please keep them coming. We will try hard to turn your support into God-pleasing results."

THE St. Louis Sem has asked AATS to lift its probation of the school since the real issue is doctrine, a matter of no concern to the AATS. It supported its 55-page appeal with a personal appearance before its executive committee; those attending included Dr. Scharlemann, Acting President of the School, and Pastor E. J. Otto, Chairman of its Board of Control, and Dr. John Klotz.

AFTER the refusal of the Seminex students to accept the vicarage proposals of the Council of Presidents, the Chairman of the Council, the Reverend Wilburt Griesse, together with the chairman of the committee dealing with these matters, the Reverend Arlen Bruns, issued a joint statement, according to the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, "The Council of Presidents expressed regret and amazement at the fact that the students of the second-year class at Seminex did not accept their assignments as vicars according to the terms on which they were offered. It is the right position of the Council that it still wishes to receive these men as gifts to the church, but that the basis of their assignments should be in accordance with the proper procedures of the synod. We, therefore, request a reconsideration on the part of the students."

ONE of our Ohio clergymen, Pastor L. H. Rasch, talking about the position the former faculty majority has taken on various matters, writes,

"This position glosses over the *Third Use of the Law of God*. Our Lutheran *Formula of Concord*, Article VI, stresses that the Law (i.e. Ten Commandments) is important even after we know Christ and believe the Gospel, because it is a guide for Christian behavior. The faculty's document called *Response* confuses the use of the Law and stresses that Christians are 'led by the Spirit.' Question: Led how? All kinds of quacks these days claim to be led by the Spirit. How do you measure them if you say the Law is no longer vital?"

Well put!

THE liberals keep a kind of drumfire going about the fact that Dr. J. A. O. Preus, Missouri's President, left the ELC years ago. Their argumentation seems to be: he stirred up trouble in the ELC before he left; now he's again expressing his destructive tendencies in Missouri. What apparently isn't said is that at the time he left the ELC was going through the same kind of a doctrinal struggle with which Missouri now must deal and that Dr. Preus left then because the liberal element had grown dominant in the ELC. In taking that step Dr. Preus was merely repeating the oldest part of Missouri's history: its founders left Germany and came to Perry County and other places in the Midwest because the same liberal theology then dominated German Lutheranism and proved intolerable to our God-fearing founders.

ONE of our Houston clergy, Pastor A. Simcak, got the conservative viewpoint across in his local press. He stated, "the basic problem is one of doctrine. The liberals keep talking about procedure, legalism, 'deals,' lack of love. But we hear precious little about doctrinal differences . . . It is evident that false teaching has been taught at the seminary. The documentation is available. The report of the fact-finding committee which interviewed the professors was sent to every pastor. Every pastor was to share this report with his people, but I imagine many laymen never heard about it. Some students who have been defending the faculty majority confessed they have not read the report."

L AYMEN can do Missouri a great service by helping to spread copies of *Affirm* among friends, key lay people not acquainted with the issues and others who should be informed. They can do this personally by ordering extra copies for this kind of distribution. Or they can send the names and addresses of these people to *Affirm* with a request that they be placed on its mailing list. One of the special joys at *Affirm* is the fact that its mailing list has grown by tens of thousands since it was launched a few years ago.

THE St. Louis Sem faculty has formal representation on the Commission on Theology and Church Relations. With the creation of the Seminex, Professors Herbert Mayer and E. Schroeder had to be replaced, since they no longer represented the Sem. Professors L. Wunderlich and H. R. Klann have been appointed in their stead to the CTCR.

♦ ♦ ♦

JOHN Elliott, former professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, wrote of the "manifestation of two quite different, if not irreconcilable, approaches toward the understanding and interpretation of both the Sacred Scriptures and the Lutheran Symbols." This was quoted by John W. Montgomery in an article in *Affirm*, Vol. II, No. 7, p. 11.

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Volume IV, No. 2
April 18, 1974

"I believed,
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2 Cor. 4:13

C.F.W. Walther in Fact and Fiction

You will find the Marquart article on Walther, featured in this issue, speaks directly and forcefully to some of the chief questions troubling Missouri. Longer than most articles AFFIRM publishes, it not only contains many choice quotations from Walther, the great leader of our church, but it also makes Missouri's solid case against those who now dissent from her doctrines.

IN the December 3, 1973, issue of *Missouri in Perspective* Erwin L. Lueker purports to present Dr. Walther's answer to the question: "What is a Lutheran?" What we actually get, however, is something like Tietjen's answer, clumsily disguised as Walther's.

Dr. Tietjen and his allies, as is well known, have been claiming for some time that they are defending the real Christ-centered Gospel against the "sub-Biblical" and "un-Lutheran" legalistic Biblicism and traditionalism of Dr. Preus.

Now, since Dr. Walther was an eminently Biblical, Lutheran theologian, his writings abound with the polished gems of Christ-centered, truly evangelical confession and exposition. By breaking a few such jewels out of their total setting, and forcing them through the "moderate" sieve, it is easy to present a censored, filtered, diluted "Walther" who looks in fact like Tietjen's identical twin!

The main illusion then is that Walther legitimizes Tietjen's claim that "the Gospel" (that is, the latter's own ambiguous slogans about it) is "enough," and that President Preus and the synod are wrong in making "other" and "additional" demands on the Seminary.

This illusion-by-selection is reinforced by placing the Walther-snippets into new and misleading contexts. Superficial verbal resemblances and false distinctions suggest to the reader an application to the present controversy which would have horrified the original author. Let us examine this technique in detail:

The reader is clearly meant to infer:

Fiction 1: That President Preus' stress on the Gospel as "a narrative, an historical account" is really "Reformed," while the Tietjen faculty's historical-critical evasions, ambiguities, and surrenders are in harmony with Walther's emphasis on "the Gospel"!

Fiction 2: That the insistence on precise, concrete "points of doctrine" is "Reformed," while the "moderates'" pietistic slogans and generalities represent Walther's stress on Christ and faith.

Fiction 3: That the Seminary is the innocent victim of that pseudo-orthodoxy which Walther condemned, viz., "attacking every apparent heretic and everything which had the appearance of being ecclesiastical laxity with utmost ferocity."

Again the anti-Walther villains are, naturally, Preus and New Orleans!

Fiction 4: That the new St. Louis Seminary theology stands with Walther against the "Biblicism" of Schmucker—and Preus!

Fiction 5: That the "moderates" are, with Walther, "person-centered," while Dr. Preus and the synod are—contrary to Walther—"book-centered."

Fiction 6: That since all American Lutheran bodies now subscribe to the Augsburg Confession, Walther would have favored union on this basis. The "ecumenically" oriented "moderates" naturally agree with Walther, while Preus and his intransigents stand in the way of true unity by insisting on narrower and more exclusive "theses" and "statements."

These, clearly, are the intended insinuations—otherwise the whole article would be pointless and irrelevant. Indeed, if Dr. Walther's words had been intended in their true and original sense—well, then Dr. Lueker would have written them up for *Affirm*, rather than for a publication dedicated to the reversal of New Orleans and to the defense of the "moderate" theological novelties.

We owe it to the blessed memory of that great man of God, and to his unsullied reputation as an orthodox Lutheran theologian, to examine the above imputations carefully in the light of the real facts both about the real Dr. Walther and about the real nature of the conflict in Missouri today. The facts that follow are grouped in six sections, corresponding to the six misinterpretations.

I.

Fact 1: Walther insists on the principle expressed thus by Aegidius Hunnius:

To be sure he is a heretic who denies an article of faith; yet not only such an one, but also he who denies a historical narration of the Holy Spirit (True Visible Church, Thesis XVIII C; also: "The False Props of the Modern Theory of Open Questions," *Lehre und Wehre*, 1868, p. 103).

Fact 2: Walther scathingly rejects all compromise with the historical-critical approach, for instance in his 1871 *Lehre und Wehre* series, "What do the newer, would-be orthodox theologians teach concerning inspiration?":

Therefore Mr. Tholuck looks down, with a pitying smile, on the older exegetes, for whom, by virtue of their acceptance of an *inspiratio literalis* (i.e. verbal inspiration) the absolute inerrancy of the New Testament writers stood firm as indubitable presupposition. For those fools the interpretation of the Old Testament given in the New Testament was normative!! While scientific exegetes like Tholuck have long ago given up this childish opinion. These redoubtable men explain the Old Testament without recourse to the New; they excuse the dear Apostles for not having interpreted quite scientifically, on account of their kinship with the rabbinical schools . . . For that Ex. 3:6 really refers to the resurrection of

(Continued on Page 5)

On The News Front

"NERVOUS exhaustion" prompted the resignation of Dr. Martin Scharlemann as Acting President of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. When he has recovered, he will resume teaching at the Sem. Faculty colleagues credit him with an excellent performance in the most difficult months of the Sem's long history and regret that his heavy schedule took the toll it did. So well had he reorganized the Sem that, they say, not only is its third quarter well in hand, but that the summer and graduate schools should also prove a smooth operation.

The chairman of the Sem's Board of Control, the Reverend E. J. Otto, stated that when the board asked Dr. Scharlemann to be the Acting President of the school, he responded with Christian simplicity, "I am your servant." Pastor Otto also commented, "He served the Board, the school, the Synod, and his Lord well. The major decisions about the future have been made, the line of direction has been set. Thank God for all that Dr. Scharlemann accomplished!"

The Board of Control can exercise various options in filling the vacancy created by Dr. Scharlemann's resignation. Whatever course it pursues, it will predictably give the school the firm and vigorous leadership which has marked it since the New Orleans convention.

♦ ♦ ♦

DR. J. A. O. Preus, Missouri's president, sees the Easter Season as the occasion for a forward thrust in missions.

The message of Good Friday and Easter reminds us again of the fact that as the redeemed children of God we should be about our Father's business of proclaiming Christ to the world, and I am hoping that the message of Easter will stir the hearts of our people so that they will give generously and witness fervently for the spreading of the "good news!" While we are having our difficulties, I know that our gracious Heavenly Father will bring us through them and we will emerge a stronger, more dynamic church than we have ever been. I am hopeful that our church will regain its former zeal in the area of missions and evangelism so that we can move forward in a world where over two billion people do not know Christ.

♦ ♦ ♦

IT is difficult to interpret the statements of Dr. Robert Marshall, President of the LCA, about Missouri's situation. The Marshall letter to all LCA pastors discusses such possibilities as the ELIM group forming a new synod and/or its members joining the LCA. This statement indicates that ELIM theology is more congenial to the LCA than to Missouri's official theology. Anyone familiar with Lutheran history in America these last decades will not be surprised by this. Some observers read these statements as indications that the ELIM group may soon leave Missouri.

♦ ♦ ♦

IN *Walther a Christian Theologian*, Dr. Th. Engelder, a generation ago, clearly and simply stated how the Gospel and the Word of God are related to each other. His choice of language reflects the common Christian understanding of the long centuries,

The Church possesses two great treasures, the Gospel of giving grace and the inspired Word of God.⁽¹⁰⁾ (Footnote #10) Which is the greater? They go together. The Church needs both of them. And we prize the one because of the value of the other. We love the Bible because it brings the Gospel of grace to us, the one thing needful. But we lose assurance of the truth of the Gospel if the certainty of Scripture is gone.

♦ ♦ ♦

LAST reports (hopefully in error) would indicate that a small core of Missouri's more liberally-inclined district presidents have agreed to bypass the regularized channels of the church and approve for vicarage in their districts men who have rejected the conditions on which their placement is to be made.

If this occurs (and we hope it doesn't), a group of young vicars, not synodically approved, will begin to minister to Missouri's congregations without the normal and official guarantees that they are fit and able for the work they are to do. The process by which Missouri has tried, as admonished by God, to do all things "decently and in order" will be further eroded.

The basic point is that if the process to which we have all agreed so long can be declared null and void by a few, we no longer have a synod, a viable church body. Surely, this needs no spelling out.

This is the broader issue—the potential threat of some district president to subvert the *Handbook* by which Missouri has agreed to govern itself. The *Handbook* regards these officials as arms of synod. Only in those matters in which Missouri has made no judgment or has given her districts freedom of decision can they and their presidents act independently of the whole church.

On the News Front:

Reasonable men understand this. The individual states of this nation are not free to subvert the will of the whole country. So Missouri's districts are not free to subvert the will of the entire synod. The nation once fought a civil war to settle this issue. Hopefully, Missouri will not experience anything even distantly parallel to that kind of anarchy.



IDENTIFYING those liberally-inclined as "Bible doubters" may have caused more stir than anything else *Affirm* has printed. If a man questions the miracle of Christ walking on the water or denies the personality of Satan or regards Jonah as a myth or believes Adam and Eve to be no more than fictional symbols of a general truth or questions all or any combination of these historical facts as well as many, many others, is it fair to call him a Bible doubter? You may judge. He may say and even be persuaded that he does believe the Bible the Word of God, but he also thinks he must regard it as a Word, often without fact, most likely at times without truth, and generally to be questioned—sometimes sentence for sentence and word for word.



ON April 10, 1974, Dr. Waldo J. Werning, Chairman of the Board for Missions, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, made the following statement concerning the resignation of Dr. Kohn,

The Board for Missions is sorry that a way could not be found to work with Dr. William H. Kohn that would unify the LCMS mission on the basis of its Gospel commitment as required by the Synod's constitution and resolutions. We are not happy that the disagreements ended by such a drastic act as resignation, but we commend Dr. Kohn for acting in such an honorable way.

Our board is responsible to the Synod to reflect the church's position, intention and resolutions in mission policies and practices. We have no authority to promote another position or variety of positions, but only that of the church for which we serve as the mission arm.

This matter has a relationship to the entire doctrinal controversy in our church regarding the basic question of the interpretation of the Bible. This has resulted in differing proposals for mission theology and practice from those we have known from the Scriptures and those our church has practiced in the past.

Acting as best and faithfully as we know, we tried in the face of difficult circumstances to act evangelically to reach our common mission objectives and goals. We were frustrated to find conflicting goals between the board and Dr. Kohn. We were greatly surprised to learn on Jan. 18 of a letter sent out by Dr. Kohn and his helpers criticizing Synod's Board for Missions for legalism, arbitrary use of power, separatism and other matters. We were grieved to learn of three other letters sent worldwide—also without our knowledge—attacking the board without our having an opportunity to give witness to our own dedication to truly Gospel and Scriptural goals for mission.

Despite Dr. Kohn's action, *we hope the staff will gladly join with the board to resolve any issues that may confront us.* The board's primary concern has been, is, and will be to carry out the mission of the church as desired by the members of the Missouri Synod. We thank Dr. Kohn for his service and wish him well." (Italics added)



TWO short quotes from the confessional writings of the Reformation will lead to a fuller grasp of how completely the reformers were committed to the third use of the Law of God as Missouri has always understood it,

It is necessary for the law of God constantly to light their way lest in their merely human devotion they undertake self-decreed and self-chosen acts of serving God." *Formula of Concord, Epitome, Article VII, Pg. 480.4*

Believers, furthermore require the teachings of the law so that they will not be thrown back on their own holiness and piety and under the pretext of the Holy Spirit's guidance set up a self-elected service of God without His Word and command. *Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article VI, Third Use of the Law, Pg. 567.20*

On the News Front:

CHARLES Potterfield Krauth wrote the classic description of how error progresses in a church; his words describe what is happening in Missouri today, just as it happened in other church bodies only yesterday. In his *The Conservative Reformation and its Theology*, he outlined the downhill process this way,

When error is admitted into the Church, it will be found that the stages of its progress are always three. It begins by asking *toleration*. Its friends say to the majority: You need not be afraid of us; we are few, and weak; only let us alone; we shall not disturb the faith of others. The Church has her standards of doctrine; of course we shall never interfere with them; we only ask for ourselves to be spared interference with our private opinions. Indulged in this for a time, error goes on to assert *equal rights*. Truth and error are two balancing forces. The Church shall do nothing which looks like deciding between them; that would be partiality. It is bigotry to assert any superior right for the truth. We are to agree to differ, and any favoring of the truth, because it is truth, is partisanship. What the friends of truth and error hold in common is fundamental. Anything on which they differ is *ipso facto* non-essential. Anybody who makes account of such a thing is a disturber of the peace of the church. Truth and error are two co-ordinate powers, and the great secret of church-statesmanship is to preserve the balance between them. From this point error soon goes on to its natural end, which is to assert *supremacy*. Truth started with *tolerating*; it comes to be merely tolerated, and that only for a time. Error claims a preference for its judgment on all disputed points. It puts men into positions, not as at first in spite of their departure from the Church's faith, but in consequence of it. Their recommendation is that they repudiate that faith, and position is given them to teach others to repudiate it, and to make them skillful in combating it.



APPARENTLY ways to get around the *Handbook* provisions for calling graduates can be worked out, for one of the district presidents wrote,

I would advise you of my position in this and respond accordingly to congregations. If a congregation needing assistance is willing to accept a graduate from Semine, who will have a diploma and a degree from an accredited school at that time, but who will not be certified for a call by the faculty at 801, I will try to assist in making arrangements for a placement on an annual contract basis in a kind of "year of residency" program which would enable the congregations to be served and the graduates to serve. Hopefully, within a year the issues will be faced and resolved or we will know better where we are in light of our convention at Anaheim.



IN a widely distributed speech, made last January, Charles H. Burmeister of the Sem's Board of Control explained his reasons for voting to suspend Dr. Tietjen. He said among other things,

Dr. Tietjen, the faculty and the students frequently speak to the Board of their *rights and freedom* given them by the Gospel. Concepts of freedom can be classified into at least two different categories. The first category is responsible freedom which includes such ideas as *self-discipline*, *self-control*, *personal responsibility* and freedom under law. The other concept of freedom, and one which is increasingly being advocated on campuses throughout the world, is permissive freedom which relates to such concepts as license, expediency, moral relativism and even anarchy. Responsible freedom in my book advances the condition of the individual and his society while the latter unconditional freedom may cause both to deteriorate. *Every* freedom owns a corresponding responsibility. This is what has made America great under God much like a natural law, common-denominator of the Bible, but more frequently than not, men are either ignorant of natural law or, if aware of it, try to ignore it.



IN celebration of Missouri's heritage and theology, discussions, rallies and services are scheduled for various cities and under various auspices. One will occur April 28th at Concordia Teachers College, River Forest. Others are scheduled for a series of weeks in New Orleans. The Hartford Free Conference will be held May 6-8th. The DCP district newsletters *Affirm* now receives continue to be timely, readable, and to the point. If space permits, *Affirm's* next issue will carry more detailed information about the widespread surge of grass-roots support for Missouri's Biblical theology.

Walther...

(Continued from Page 1)

the dead, Mr. Tholuck by no means believes, although the living God Himself asserts it in Matt. 22:32. Rather, this man, who calls himself a doctor of divinity, dares to judge thus of the authentic explanation of his God: "One Old Testament interpretation has given the impression of rabbinical subtlety, not quite without reason. It is Matt. 22:32" (p. 42).

Of the five books of Moses, which the Lord and the Apostles attribute to Moses in more than twenty places, Delitzsch teaches that they are a *mixtum compositum* from all sorts of different workshops (p. 101).

A man who makes a novel out of the first chapter of Genesis must necessarily find the inerrancy of the Bible inconvenient (p. 106).

But an unknown forger had the impertinence to invent visions and to spread them among the people under the fraudulent name of Daniel . . . Certainly Mr. Kahnis has proved with this his disquisition that he believes in the Lord Himself as little as in the writings of Daniel. He—the Lord, after all—said to His Christians (Matt. 24:15): "When now you see the abomination of desolation of which it was spoken through the prophet Daniel" . . . Here Christ not only attests the genuineness and truthfulness of the prophecies of Daniel, but also draws from this an important conclusion . . . I do not know whom Mr. Kahnis takes the Lord to be. But he who regards Him as the Son of God must regard Mr. Kahnis' disquisition as blasphemy. Yes, blasphemy. Let no one call this expression too strong! For when a pope seeks to strengthen his title of possession by means of the fraudulent Donation of Constantine, we heap contempt upon him. And the Son of the living God is supposed to have committed this same villainy; to have built His exhortation to the disciples on the product of a deceiver devoid of conscience (134-135).

II.

Fact 3: Dr. Walther insists precisely on "points of doctrine":

The Evangelical Lutheran Church is certain that the doctrine contained in her Symbols is the pure divine truth, because it agrees with the written Word of God in all points (*True Visible Church*, Thesis XXI A).

When a theologian wants to yield not even in one single point of Christian doctrine, so that there might at last be peace in the Church, then this of course looks to the eyes of reason like intolerable stubbornness, yes, like open malice . . . Therefore, blessed be all the faithful warriors, who fought, without asking for human favor, without fearing men, for every point of Christian doctrine! (*Law and Gospel*, Fourth Lecture).

And Walther often cited, with emphasis on the "all", F. C., S. D., X. 31: "agreed in doctrine and in all its articles".

In the April, 1855 *Lehre und Wehre* Walther approvingly printed Stroebel's reply to a Dr. R. Stier's theses:

"(57) The 'evangelium' Mr. Stier will no doubt tolerate, but not the 'doctrina evangelii,' for that is not supposed to be the basis on which the Christian

Church can and must rest . . . the Gospel of these people simply is no *doctrina*, but something good for kitchen and cellar."

III.

Fact 4: The "attacking . . . with utmost ferocity" undoubtedly referred to the likes of Pastor Grabau and his Buffalo Synod, who, with incredible hierarchical pretensions, excommunicated the opponents they could not refute, especially Missouri with its "loose," "unchurchly," "democratic" doctrines of the Church and the Ministry.

To compare such malicious calumnies, by implication, with the well-deserved censure of the St. Louis Seminary's aberrations from the very foundations of Biblical, Lutheran theology, is itself grossly calumnious. And to drag in Walther's name is doubly so.

IV.

Fact 5: The accusation of "Biblicism" against Schmucker is not Walther's but Lueker's. Walther would not have dreamt of it. For him Schmucker was not excessively but insufficiently Biblical. What horrified Walther was Schmucker's surrender of Lutheran doctrines like the Real Presence for the sake of unhindered fraternization with the Reformed denominations.

Fact 6: Prominent Missouri "moderates," including seminary professors, have publicly sided with Schmucker, against Walther, by supporting "A Call to Openness and Trust" (January 31, 1970), which held that, among other things, "the definition of the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper" should not be regarded as church-divisive. This is blatant defiance not of this or that little point in the Lutheran Confessions, but of a vital doctrine to which every single one of the Confessions, except the Tractate, devotes a whole major article or section! To link such treason in any way with the name of that stalwart Lutheran confessor, Dr. Walther, is sheer impudence.

Fact 7: As regards "Biblicism" Dr. Walther was far more rigorous than Schmucker. Apart from Dr. Walther's better known books and addresses, I would refer the reader especially to his much augmented edition of Baier's *Compendium*, and to Vol. XIV of *Lehre und Wehre* (1868), which contains the two magnificent series "What is Theology?" and "The False Props of the Modern Theory of Open Questions."

In the face of all this evidence will anyone dare to claim in all seriousness that Walther's writings give any aid and comfort whatsoever to the position of today's "moderates?" On the contrary: He vigorously insisted on the *factually inerrant* Bible as the *formal principle* of theology; they scorn and deny this ("A Call to Openness and Trust," "Faithful to Our Calling, etc.")). ELIM, by the way, find this business so awkward that in recommending an essay by Fred Mayer published by them, they make the astounding admission that it "was edited slightly to eliminate the frequently confusing terms 'formal' and 'material' principles of theology, in order that it might be suitable for congregational use" (*Perspective*, Dec. 24, 1973, p. 4).

Here now are some samples of the real Walther's "Biblicism."

(Kahnis): " 'Protestantism stands and falls with the principle of the sole authority of Scripture. But this principle is independent of the doctrine of inspiration of the old dogmatics. To embrace it again as it was can be done only with a hardening against the truth!' We must confess, when we read these words, we were right heartily frightened by them. Who can go along with a new theology which introduces itself as the further development of the old Lutheran theology, and then deviates from the doctrinal model of our old theology precisely in the doctrine of the principle of theology, of Holy Scripture, viz., of the

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Walther . . .

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ratio formalis scripturae, of that which makes Holy Scripture what it is?" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1855, p. 248).

"... in the orthodox church freedom may not be granted to deviate even in the smallest point from God's clear Word, be it negatively or positively, directly or indirectly; that such deviation from God's clear Word, even if it consisted merely in the denial that Balaam's ass spoke, requires of the orthodox church that it institute proceedings against this . . . For if the Bible is God's Word, then all affirmations contained in it are decisions of the high divine Majesty Itself. But is it not frightful to declare undecided what the great God has decided? When the great God has spoken, to grant liberty to man to contradict Him?" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1868, pp. 68,69).

"He who imagines that he finds in the Holy Scripture even only one error, believes not in Scripture, but in himself; for even if he accepted everything else as truth, he would believe it not because Scripture says so, but because it agrees with his reason or with his heart. 'Dear fellow,' writes Luther, 'God's Word is God's Word, and won't tolerate much fooling about . . . Look, the circumcision of Abraham is now an old, dead thing, and is now neither necessary nor useful; still, if I were to say: God did not command it at that time, then nothing would help me, even if I believed the Gospel' " (*ibid.*, p. 101).

"Basically Mr. Nitzsch is far from believing that the whole Bible is God's Word. But because of certain devout little old ladies in his congregation and because of a few other people he doesn't want to come straight out with it. But he gives a hint with the fencepost, as it were. Everything astronomical, physical, geographical, ethnographic, in short everything scientific in the Bible—he says—is by no means revealed" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1871, p. 40).

Luthardt had denied the old doctrine of inspiration, but sensed that the modern substitutes were unsatisfactory. "But he does not want to go back to the old ship, definitely does not want to go back. He maintains in fact that this ship had been brought down by facts! It is no true ship at all!! Only a kind of Flying Dutchman!!! A construction of dogmatic logic, i.e. of the imagination.—Poor Lutherans, who have been sailing to the haven of salvation in this ship for three hundred years! Have you really arrived? Have you? Of course you have. For your faith, which clung to God's Word, has overcome the world" (*ibid.*, p. 99).

"For he who wholeheartedly believes that the Bible is God's Word cannot believe it to be otherwise than inerrant" (*ibid.*, p. 135).

(Luthardt): "Th. Harnack now takes up the false, un-Lutheran (!) attitude to Holy Scripture, according to which it, rather than above all Christ, is made the foundation and cornerstone of faith, and revelation itself. It (Scripture) is the witness and the crowning final component of the history of the mighty acts of God, and as such the norm of the church's proclamation . . . Hence also the inerrancy of Holy Scripture is taken as one which must be understood and measured according to the real intention of Scripture. 'Scripture, I say with Volck, simply is something better than a book without errors;' so that apart from the revelation of salvation the possibility of erroneous contemporary conceptions and the like must be assumed from the outset . . ."

So far Luthardt.

Until recently the modern-believing theologians treated their doctrine of Holy Scripture, which overturns the foundation of the whole Christian religion, like a secret doctrine for theologians . . . No doubt the gentlemen thought that by now even non-theologians might have progressed far enough to be able to endure an admittedly somewhat glaring light like that that Scripture is full of errors . . .

The most horrifying aspect of the matter by the way is the fact that the new prophets want to make the Lutheran Christian peo-

ple believe that the doctrine that the Scriptures of the prophets, apostles, and evangelists are really inspired by the Holy Spirit according to content and form, and therefore free from all erroneous material—is not the Lutheran, but the 'pietistic-Reformed'! That is a perfectly ghastly fraud which is being perpetrated on the Lutheran Christian people (*Lehre und Wehre*, September, 1885, pp. 277-279).

Is this "ghastly fraud" not at the heart of the whole contention in Missouri today, especially at the St. Louis seminary?

Yes, the late Dr. C. S. Meyer put it much more honestly than Dr. Lueker, when he admitted, from his "moderate" point of view, that Walther's doctrine of the Word "was not wholly Christocentric but tended toward biblicism" (*CTM XLIII*, 262).

Finally, isn't it hypocritical to make a dreadful to-do (falsely yet!) about "common causes with fundamentalists and revivalistic Reformed" while cheerfully cultivating the most cordial fellowship with liberal and existentialist Reformed? Dr. Walther would have cut off his right arm rather than accept an honorary doctorate, as Dr. Tietjen did, from the liberal, Bible-dishonoring Reformed Eden Seminary in St. Louis! Indeed Walther declined, on confessional grounds, just such a doctorate from the nominally Lutheran theological faculty of the University of Goettingen.

V.

Fact 8: Lueker's sentence, "True Lutheran doctrine has always been person-centered rather than book-centered" is a classic example of false alternatives. This has always caused a lot of mischief. Hence Melancthon in the *Apology* urges Socrates' admonition, in making distinctions, "to cut the member at the joint, lest like an unskilled cook he sever the member at the wrong place" (XXIV,16)!

The fact of course is that true Lutheran theology has always been Person (Christ)-centered and Book-based. Will anyone dare to deny that this is true of Walther's theology, but not of that of the "moderates"? "Faithful to our Calling, etc." is at pains to urge the material principle ("the Gospel") in the place of and to the exclusion of the formal principle (the absolute authority of the inerrant Book). Hence C. S. Meyer's critique of Walther. Hence also Lueker's misconception of "true Lutheran doctrine."

It is a pipe-dream of modern-theological ego-tripping that one can honor the Person by dishonoring His Book!

Fact 9: The "moderate" position is "person-centered" indeed, but in the subjective, worldly-carnal sense of man-centered or self-centered (Rom. 16:18):

Jesus Christ came into the world, not to institute doctrine, but to save people (see Mark 2:27). And when people, bought by the blood of Christ, become expendable for the sake of what may (or may not) be pure doctrine, Christ's purposes are frustrated and that is sinful (Front page editorial in December 3 *Perspective*).

This is exactly the sort of sentimental snivelling for which Walther so despised the "American Lutheranism" of the old General Synod. Let ELIM's "respectable and responsible Christian scholarship" take note of one of Walther's favorite Luther-quotes:

In short we want to have all articles of Christian doctrine, be they great or small (although for us none is small and trivial), completely pure and certain, and will not yield one tittle in this. And that's the way it must be. For doctrine is our only light, which shines for us, and leads us, and points the way to Heaven . . . if we are careless here, love won't

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help us. We can well be saved without the sacramentarians' love and unity; but not without the pure doctrine and faith . . . Therefore one must . . . diligently separate doctrine from life. Doctrine is Heaven, life is the earth . . . But with doctrine it is quite another matter; for it is holy, pure, clear, heavenly, divine: whoever wants to change and falsify it must not be shown either love or mercy . . . for one letter, yes one single tittle of Scripture is of vastly greater consequence than heaven and earth" (*True Visible Church*, under Thesis XVII, and Foreword to *Lehre und Wehre*, 1860, p. 13).

And to W. Loehe's complaints about Missouri's narrow-mindedness, especially on chiliasm and church and ministry, Walther replied:

They accuse the church of hardness because she will not permit them to deviate from God's Word; and they refuse to see that their own hardness with which they cling to their delusion is the sole cause of the fragmentation and dissolution of the church. Should truth yield to error, and not rather error to the truth? (Foreword to *Lehre und Wehre*, 1860, p. 43).

No doubt "respectable and responsible Christian scholarship" can imagine without further assistance what the real Walther would have done with that other terrible Dec. 3 *Perspective* editorial, "Absolute Truth and Love," based, appropriately (?), on a text from that devotee of Hindoo paganism, Gandhi!

VI.

Fact 10: Had Walther shared the easy-going pan-Lutheran ecumania of present day "moderates," he could have spared himself a lifetime of blood, sweat, and tears.

But the fact is that Walther was not impressed by the mere ceremonial acceptance of the Augsburg Confession or even of the whole Book of Concord. That practice was popular then, especially in General Synod circles, and it is nearly universal today.

The General Synod accepted the Augsburg Confession "as a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the divine Word." This restriction, and the resultant theology and practice, Walther always condemned in the strongest terms. For example, in the April, 1859 issue of *Lehre und Wehre*, he printed a lengthy attack on the General Synod, which, "without much wagging with the fox-tail," used terms like "abomination," "hypocrisy," "dishonesty before God and men," "lazy, false love-spirit," etc.

Fact 11: The St. Louis faculty majority's "subscription" to the Confessions is, if anything, even looser than that of the General Synod: "Our commitment to the Lutheran Confessions means that we adopt their governing theological principles and engage in the theological enterprise in the same way the confessions did" ("Faithful, etc. Discussion Four).

And that same faculty faction's house-organ, the CTM (the successor of Dr. Walther's no-nonsense *Lehre und Wehre*!) has dared to claim editorially: "It is not part of the doctrinal content of the Lutheran Confessions (which alone is binding) that they are to be used today as a rule and norm for Christian faith and life" (XLII, 259; *italics in original*!).

Fact 12: Far from being content with mere formal acceptance of the Augsburg Confession, Dr. Walther insisted on full obedience to the entire Christian doctrine in all points—even in those not yet formally fixed in the Confessions!

The Evangelical Lutheran Church accepts the written Word of God (as God's Word) in its entirety, considers nothing contained in it superfluous or

trivial, but everything as necessary and important, and also accepts all the doctrines which necessarily follow from the words of Scripture (*True Visible Church*, Thesis XVII).

True Evangelical Lutheran particular or local churches or congregations are only those in which the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as laid down in her Symbols, is not only legally acknowledged, but also holds sway in the public preaching (*ibid.*, XXII).

The orthodox church has reached finality not only with regard to those articles which are set out in her Symbols, but implicitly with regard to all which are contained in the Word of God (*L&W*, 1860, p. 43).

We cannot regard and treat as an open question any doctrine clearly taught in God's Word or contradicting God's clear Word, no matter how subordinated and far removed from the center of the doctrine of salvation, away in the periphery, it may seem to be or may really be (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1868, p. 66).

But also those grant to the Symbols a false position, who want nothing regarded as Lutheran and churchly except what is explicitly laid down in the Symbols; thereby they do nothing else than that they make the Book of Concord into the Bible of the Lutherans (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1868, p. 194).

On the contrary, it is clear . . . that there are many Lutheran, churchly dogmas which are not contained in the Symbols of our church, and thus not, as they say nowadays, symbolically fixed . . . The assumption that a doctrine becomes a Lutheran, churchly dogma only through its acceptance into our Symbols, but prior to that is an open question, is contradicted finally also by the fact that our church in her Symbols commits herself by no means only to the doctrines which she there, on account of certain circumstances, explicitly mentions, but to the entire Holy Scripture, hence to all doctrines contained in it (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1868, pp. 205, 208).

No man has the freedom, and to no man may be granted the freedom, to believe or teach otherwise than God has revealed in His Word, whether this have to do with . . . fundamental or non-fundamental doctrines, matters of faith or of life, historical or other material subject to the light of nature, important, or seemingly unimportant matters . . .

That those doctrines which are not symbolically fixed are to be reckoned among open questions, militates against the historical origin of the Symbols, as well as against the fact that they do not want to give a complete doctrinal system and at the same time commit themselves to the entire content of Scripture as the object of the church's faith ("Theses About the Modern Theory of Open Questions," VII and XII, *Lehre und Wehre*, 1868, pp. 318-319).

Fact 13: In practice Dr. Walther and the Missouri Synod implemented these principles, e.g. by refusing fellowship to the Buffalo, Iowa, and Ohio Synods, and to the very conservative General Council, all of which professed subscription not only to the Augsburg Confession, but to all the Symbolical Books. The doctrinal differences were considered church-divisive by the Missouri Synod. And far from despising "theses or statements," Dr. Walther himself wrote dozens of them, to express true Biblical, Confessional unity on various doctrines. It is well known that at the time of the Election Controversy, the Missouri

(Continued on Page 8)

Walther...

(Continued from Page 7)

Synod adopted Walther's Thirteen Theses (1881) and insisted on their acceptance as proof of genuine adherence to the Biblical doctrine of Article XI of the Formula of Concord. Church-fellowship was refused to those who claimed to accept the Formula of Concord, but rejected the 13 Theses.

Fact 14: Dr. Walther wrote a great deal about the Lutheran Church, not about a mere "organization." Why does Dr. Lueker choose that pitiful word? Cannot the "moderates" face Walther's doctrine of the Church? Do they fear its keen dogmatic edge?

Mere organizations can afford to play parliamentary games; a church must believe, teach, and confess—and not on paper only but in practice, and to the point of doctrinal discipline. Walther demanded such confession and doctrinal discipline. His Foreword to the 1860 volume of *Lehre und Wehre* answers W. Loehe's sentimental appeal for "unity" by showing in detail how doctrinal discipline was practiced in the orthodox Lutheran Church after the adoption of the Formula of Concord.

It is not the exercise of doctrinal discipline, but resistance to and evasion of the honest implications of confession, which is "church politics."

Walther had nothing but contempt for the shallow organizational obsessions of the General Synod. In the July, 1859 *Lehre und Wehre* he printed a Missouri observer's scathing report on a convention of the General Synod. Dismissing that synod's claim to "admirable Christian feeling and mutual love," the report notes:

Up to now also in the battles of the Lutherans the main weapon was: 'it is written.' In the so-called Lutheran General Synod this weapon is unknown. What people rely on, what is supposed to silence the opponent, is the authority of their notorious General Synod constitution. Among Lutherans one submits to the Bible, among the Romans to the Pope, among the General Synodists to the constitution!

Perhaps "respectable and responsible Christian scholarship" will notice the baffling resemblance to current Missouri: the supposed "legalist," President Preus, like his illustrious predecessor, implements the theological substance of the Church's confession in modern, relevant terms. Meanwhile the "Gospel only" people avoid doctrinal specifics like the plague—when for instance will *Perspective's* discussion of "Faithful, etc." honestly face the theological arguments against it?—and cry "Constitution! Article II!"

While Walther's successors pursue theological faithfulness and honesty, their "evangelical" critics quibble about organizational technicalities, and, amid the most vulgar appeals

to the secular prejudices of an absurd permissiveness fomented by the media, threaten law-suits before the civil authorities! These then are the realities behind all the talk about "Law and Gospel."

* * *

Undoctored history plainly will not allow the silly charade of clothing the "moderate" theological nakedness with the prestigious mantle of C. F. W. Walther. Perhaps Dr. Lueker and the editors of *Perspective* really did not know any better—this time. But if the attempt is made again, it will be against better knowledge.

The Rev. Kurt Marquart
Member, Commission of Theology
Lutheran Church of Australia
Toowoomba, Australia

Affirm

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216

The Editorial Group

The Rev. William T. Eggers
Richard G. Korthals
Dr. Walter A. Maier
The Rev. Ewald J. Otto
Dr. Robert Preus

Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

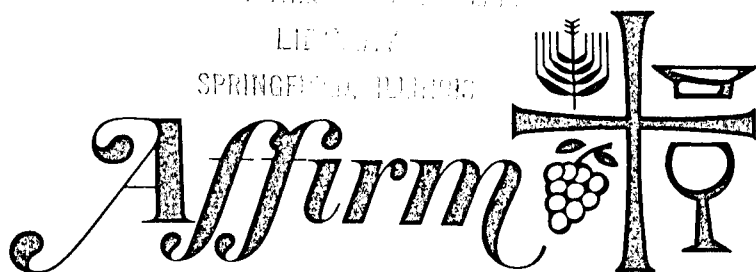
For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

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Volume IV, No. 3
May 20, 1974

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

THE successful rally recently held in Bellville, Illinois is typical of many conservative rallies held during recent months across the country. The attendance at them and the joy with which they are received reflect a great grassroots longing for the stable and sure theology of God's Word. *Affirm* encourages such rallies; a speakers bureau will help you find and appropriate person to address a rally. Write to Dr. J. A. O. Preus, President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 500 North Broadway, St. Louis, Missouri 63102 or, if you need help more rapidly, telephone (314) 231-6969.

COMMENTING on recent Mission Board actions. Dr. J. A. O. Preus stated, "I think the Mission Board has taken the necessary first steps toward solving its problems and I hope that under God these matters can soon be cleared up so that the church can concentrate all the energies available to it on the task of evangelizing the world—the first and great task our Lord gave it."

AS *Affirm* goes to press, only one Seminex graduate had showed up for the interviews arranged by the St. Louis Sem's personnel to qualify Seminex students for calls. The Sem faculty had taken great pains to arrange a schedule of interviews with these young men in order to determine their theological qualifications and attitudes and their overall fitness for Missouri's public ministry. A handful of students, who for one reason or another couldn't be present for their interviews, did phone the Sem faculty, but the silence of the other students was deafening and may long be remembered in Missouri together with that series of actions which apparently is leading them into a *cul-de-sac* of their own making.

IN recent weeks, conservatives in Minnesota South, Texas, Colorado, Canada, the Northwest District, the Southern District, and Oklahoma have sent copies of their publications to *Affirm*. All reflect the grassroots concern for pure doctrine, all are pointed, and all are attractively packaged. Hopefully, more leadership groups in districts will soon use this means of building conservative support in Missouri!

WORD has it that Missouri's Board of Directors may soon have the ELIM question on its agenda. Viewed from a Scriptural, moral, and constitutional or legal basis, ELIM must be described as a church within a church, trying to undermine more than 125 years of history of faithfulness to God's word. *Affirm* believes that synod's board can reach but one logical conclusion—to take a strong stand against ELIM. *Affirm* looks forward to reading about such a decision by the board.

THE St. Louis Sem offers a rich selection of courses during the two summer terms it will conduct. They range from Genesis 1 to Luther studies, parish administration and the church in an urban society. They promise those who participate an attractive combination of growth in professional knowlege and in edification.

YEARS ago Dr. W. Arndt's *Does the Bible Contradict Itself?* was a perennial stock item of Concordia Publishing House. In these days in which the Historical-Critical Method comes under heavy discussion, Pastor James L. Rongstad has written a Bible course based on this book and called *An Outline of Does the Bible Contradict Itself?* At the moment it is available in limited quantities for \$1.50 (including postage) from Salem Lutheran Church, 418 Fourth Street, Gretna, Louisiana 70053.

THE following letter from the pages of the May 6th issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* speaks for itself.

In reference to your April 15 story regarding Concordia Seminary—St. Louis, *The Chronicle* stated that “the American Association of Theological Schools ruled that since Saint Louis and Eden were both accredited, the Joint Project would be accredited, as well.” This is not accurate.

The association has made no ruling regarding the Joint Project. The A. A. T. S. staff has expressed its confidence in the competence of the two fully accredited schools to monitor the educational integrity and quality of the Joint Project for Theological Education. No reference to accreditation for the project (Seminex-Ed) has been made.

MARVIN J. TAYLOR

Associate Director

American Association of Theological Schools
Vandalia, Ohio

ONE of the most enheartening responses to the current struggle in Missouri has come from its laity across the nation. Laymen are saying with a clear and almost unanimous voice that Missouri shouldn't compromise, that it should stand for its great heritage of Biblical truths, and that it should hold firm to the great moral principles which have marked historic Lutheranism. *Affirm* thanks God that, over and over again, in their own way these laymen echo Luther's closing at the Diet of Worms, “Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise, God help me!” Missouri needs more of this strong support of her conservative theology.

OFFICIALS at the St. Louis Seminary have made a fair and rational proposal concerning the qualification of Seminex students who want to be certified to Missouri's Ministry: they planned to certify those students who met with faculty representatives and were found qualified for the ministry. Moreover, they have offered those who delayed availing themselves of this process the opportunity to attend the Sem's summer school and so obtain a Master of Divinity degree together with a theological diploma.

AN active Ohio committee has asked the Board of Directors of the Ohio District to rescind its March 29th resolution to,

“redirect ten percent of all funds normally provided Synod through our District for the support of our brothers in Christ, the faculty and students at Seminex” unless the Synod's Board of Directors “does not in a positive way respond to our appeal” (to provide for the maintenance of all Seminary faculties including Seminex).

The Committee notes that,

“it would be irresponsible and disloyal to Synod if any board, officer, commission or district were to ‘redirect’ funds intended for Synodical purposes to non-legitimate functions;

and also urges the Board of Directors,

“to promote a different approach toward reconciliation; this approach being that of laying it upon the hearts and minds of all LCMS members to use the official channels of Synod for all procedures and practices even when offering dissent . . .”

ANALYSTS familiar with the synodical scene now look for growing conservative strength at many of the district conventions this year. They feel that Missouri's laity has become familiar with the broad issues confronting the church and with the critical Biblical truths at stake, that the laity together with the conservative clergy will take steps to ensure conservative strength at these conventions. They also look ahead to the crucial Anaheim convention next summer with increased certainty that, under God, conservatives can again prevail at a synodical convention and with the knowledge that given the intensity of the struggle in Missouri, the swing vote on the Anaheim floor will likely be less than ten percent. They know that this makes the selection of Anaheim delegates one of the most critical agenda items for conservatives.

MORE and more pastors, who have placed themselves somewhere along the liberal spectrum, are discovering that their congregations do not appreciate their "advanced" views. Even in the citadel of Missouri's liberalism, St. Louis, congregations forcefully speak out by refusing to hear from their own pulpits pastors of liberal persuasion and by indicating in other ways their strong conservative stand. For many years congregations rightly listened with few doubts to their pastors, for across the country these men consistently stood for sound Christian doctrine. Nowadays, unfortunately, congregations must on occasion examine the theology of the men in their pulpits and, if they find it wanting, exercise their congregational rights and duties with respect to these men.

ONE of the congregations of the Missouri District has in preparation a resolution directing the president of that district to initiate appropriate disciplinary action against those seminary professors who dissent from Missouri's views. The congregation apparently wants to preserve, as do all orthodox Missouri Lutheran Congregations, Missouri's community of faith on the terms on which it has been maintained for more than a century.

MISSOURI'S struggle must inevitably have repercussions in its overseas missions; in fact, the resignations of a number of officials in her mission carry with them many overtones. The Mission Board asks your prayers that the effect of Missouri's controversy on overseas Christians, often new to the faith, will be minimal.

TELEGRAM TO:

Faculty and Students of Concordia Seminary
Attention: Dr. Robert Preus

Brothers:

Feeling we have delayed too long, already, we feel bound to ask your forgiveness for our failure to encourage you in your present situation. We thank God for your steadfast support of our synod's doctrinal positions.

(Signed) Members of Concordia
Springfield Sem IV Class

(48 signatures)

THE fourth year Seminary class responded to the Council of Presidents resolution by passing two resolutions: 1) that the fourth year class request that the faculty submit a list of qualified candidates to the Council; and 2) that the class will make no public statement regarding the resolutions at this time. On Wednesday morning following the Eucharist, faculty spokesman Robert Bertram officially gave the list to Dr. Arlen Bruns, Kansas District President and head of the Council Placement Committee, along with the following cover letter:

Dear President Bruns:

The young men whom we hereby recommend for the Office of the Ministry are no ordinary men. In the trials and tests of recent months they have displayed remarkable maturity. At great personal risk they have stood up and been counted and they have carried one another's burdens. We recommend them especially because of the gift they have demonstrated for confessing and proclaiming the Word of God. They have joined us even to the point of exile in order that that Word may not be bound but may be preached to the joy and edifying of Christ's holy people. With us they unreservedly accept as their sufficient doctrinal standard the Synod's confession concerning Scripture and the Lutheran Symbols (Constitution Article II). Therefore, with pardonable pride and with gratitude to our Lord we cheerfully give these candidates the endorse-

ment they require. In the words of the synodical *Handbook*, we declare them "in every respect qualified for the Office of the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the church." If their own ability for the Office of the Ministry is ever challenged, we promise to stand by them. We invite all of the church to concur in our endorsement of them and to praise God for these His servants.

(Signed): The Faculty of
Concordia Seminary in Exile

This letter and the resolution of the fourth year class were also endorsed by the entire Seminex community. Later, Wednesday, Dr. Bruns transmitted the list to Dr. Robert Preus of the 801 faculty. Friday morning all fourth year Seminex students received letters asking them to appear for an interview with the 801 faculty indicating that it is the intent of the 801 faculty to interview all of the Seminex candidates. The Reverend Wilbert Griesse, Chairman of the Council of Presidents, issued a memo, which states, "There evidently is some confusion regarding the word 'advise' in our resolution. The general understanding, I feel, is that the 801 faculty is the final determiner in the event of an impasse. But we all hope that we don't have to use such authority and that a loving decision can be reached in all cases."

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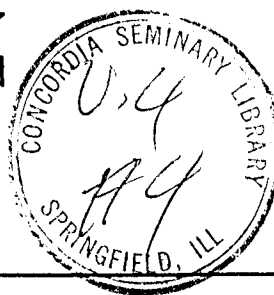
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Volume IV, No. 4
June 20, 1974



"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

'Balance' Approved By Synod's Board of Directors; 'ELIM' Rejected

ON June 3, the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod issued a statement which is highly significant. On May 29 the Board of Directors had met with Reverend Walter Hoffmann, Vice-President of Balance, Inc., and with Reverend Sam Roth and Mr. Elwyn Ewald of ELIM (Evangelical Lutherans in Mission). After discussing with these representatives of their respective organizations, founded by members of the Missouri Synod, the Board came to some significant conclusions, conclusions which have not received sufficient attention in the Missouri Synod. Concerning Balance, Inc., the Board of Directors resolved the following:

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors of the Synod has studied the objects and functions of the organization Balance, Inc., having been supplied with the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and statements of goals and objectives by representatives of Balance, Inc., upon request of the Board, as well as complete and detailed financial records which have aided the Board in determining the nature of the Balance, Inc., organization and its impact upon the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors has heretofore and on two occasions (see Board of Directors minutes of January and March 1974, Items 249 and 436 respectively) announced its opinion that the solicitation by Balance, Inc., for subscriptions to its publication *Affirm* does not constitute solicitation of capital or operating funds within the meaning of Bylaw 2.85c; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors express no comment beyond its already announced action with regard to Balance, Inc.

Concerning ELIM, the Board of Directors resolved the following:

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors by this resolution advise the Synod that the Board views the

activities of ELIM as being divisive within the church (cf. Art. II, synodical Constitution), and has the potential for division of the Synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board encourage all within the Synod who are involved in the activities of ELIM to refrain from any disturbance of the church or any improper attempt to take upon themselves the objectives of the Synod.

SUCH an action by the Board of Directors is very important. It tells that Balance, Inc., has in every way sought to support the Constitution, the Bylaws, and more particularly, the Biblical and confessional position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, that it has never raised money for any other purpose and has never sought to compete with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in any of its objectives. ELIM, on the other hand, is clearly a church within a church, a corporation dedicated to the overthrow of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in its present form, the overthrow not only of its present administration, but also of its doctrinal position.

The Board of Directors apparently recognizes full well that ELIM is an organization primarily of dissident clergymen dedicated to taking over the Missouri Synod's structure and theology. The Board of Directors is acting in a most appropriate manner as it condemns this power move by a small group of dissatisfied, dissident people within the Synod. The ELIM group will probably ignore the directives and opinion of the Board of Directors. This is true to form; and it will remain, no doubt, for Anaheim to decide with finality the ELIM problem. But let every true Missourian know that this group of dissidents has now been condemned by the highest Board in Synod. In spite of ELIM's pious phrases and arguments, the Board of Directors and other leaders in the Synod see what the true result of this movement is, total polarization in Synod and the impossibility of any kind of reconciliation. Dr. Jacob Preus, and the Board of Directors have been seeking this reconciliation for many months now, trying every possible means to bring it about. This recent action of the Board shows that they have failed. The hundreds of thousands of Christians in our Synod have no choice now but to recognize this fact.

Seminex Rejects Offer

AT its last board meeting the St. Louis Concordia Seminary Board of Control sent a conciliatory letter to the dissident professors at Seminex who left their calls at Concordia and started an opposition seminary. In essence the letter asked for reconciliation and suggested possible reinstatement as professors at Concordia. The Seminex professors have now given a lengthy response which can only be considered insolent and arrogant. The response assumes Concordia Seminary needs the Seminex professors in order to carry out its work beginning in the fall quarter. It assumes that the Seminex professors are indispensable for theological training in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Nothing could be further from the truth. Under the able leadership of Dr. Ralph Bohlmann Concordia Seminary will be able to carry out its function beginning next fall better than before.

The Seminex faculty in its response rejected the Board's proposal for any kind of interviews, insisting rather on what they called "fraternal discussions" which denied the Board any authority relative to the supervision of the former professors at Concordia Seminary. Furthermore, the Seminex faculty insisted that President Preus be involved in the discussions as one who is guilty of "oppression" and other sins, and is somehow responsible for the problems the dissident professors have brought upon themselves.

The Seminex faculty seems insistent on depriving President Preus of his Constitutional prerogative of supervising doctrine in the Missouri Synod and mediating when controversy occurs. They offer "fraternal discussions," as they say, but refuse to accept any judgments of the Synod or the authority of any officer or board in the Synod. They conclude by urging the Board of Control to suggest to seminary students at 801 that they attend the makeshift and unaccredited Seminex operation at the Jesuit St. Louis university next fall.

THE reply is clearly calculated to serve as a rejection to every *bona fide* offer that the Board has made. This is consistent with the Seminex leadership, especially as they have maintained their hold over the students during the past months. The students, under the leadership of the Seminex faculty, have rejected every proposal by the Board for Higher Education, the Board of Control, and the present faculty at Concordia Seminary for reconciliation and for aid in placing the students responsibly into vicarage and pastoral offices. This means that the Seminex people wish to continue their operation until Anaheim at which time they hope to gain control over The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and thus undo everything that past Synodical conventions have decided relative to their activities and their doctrinal aberrations.

The Seminex reply was written by Professor Robert Bertram. Bertram is perhaps one of the most intransigent of the Seminex professors. At the recent Council of Presidents meeting, he made it quite clear that he would advise students of Seminex to reject any certification or qualification by the 801 faculty to help them to enter legitimately the ministry of the Missouri Synod. This means that Dr. Bertram and his followers at Seminex leave no way open except for District Presidents, congregations and Seminex students to break the Constitution of the Missouri Synod as they seek to place these men in congregations of the Synod. The Seminex leaders with their ELIM supporters hope in this way to destroy all authority in the Missouri Synod by the time of the next convention.

It is highly probable that neither the Board of Control, the Board for Higher Education, the Board of Directors which has now condemned ELIM and thus indirectly Seminex, nor the elected officials of Synod will accept this type of ultimatum which once again is proclaimed by Dr. Bertram, the spokesman for the Seminex people. It is also likely that no reconciliation or detente will be achieved prior to Anaheim. The intransigent Seminex faculty will see to that.

Concordia Seminary And The AATS

CONCORDIA Seminary in St. Louis has been for the last several years the second largest Lutheran Seminary in the world. Only the Menighetsfakultet, a free faculty serving the Lutheran Church of Norway, has in recent years had more students. Concordia Seminary has served the Lutheran Church for 135 years, longer than the Synod itself has been in existence. The readers of *Affirm* are well aware of the tragedies that have befallen this Seminary during the last five years. Under the leadership of Dr. John Tietjen, the Seminary was put on probation in June, 1974 for a number of reasons.

According to a recent action of the AATS, (American Association of Theological Schools) this probation was lifted. All the notations against the Seminary, most of which centered in objections to the way in which the Synod controls the theology taught at Concordia Seminary, were lifted by the AATS at its recent meeting in Vandalia, Ohio on June 5th and 6th.

The AATS, however, did not see fit to give the beleaguered Seminary, suffering under the exodus of the majority of its professors and students, and their continued opposition, a clean bill of health. Rather the AATS imposed a new probation upon our Seminary. Ignoring apparently the terrific crisis facing the Seminary after the walkout of some 32 professors, the AATS imposed another probation, centering in the fact that the Seminary at the present time does not have sufficient faculty to carry out effectively its academic commitments and particularly the work of a competent graduate school. This probation is probably justified, although it shows no sympathy for the fact that the present situation was in no sense the fault of the present faculty, the Board of Control or the Synod itself.

THE probation, however, should not in any way hamper the operations of our Seminary. Rather, the probation should serve as an impetus to Dr. Bohlmann, Interim President, to secure the best possible faculty in order to meet the requirements of the AATS as it seeks to carry out its accrediting function. Already, four out of the sixteen men called to Concordia, have accepted calls there. The anticipation is that many more will do so. There is no doubt whatsoever that the AATS notations against Concordia will be heeded by Dr. Bohlmann and the Board of Control, and Concordia by January 21, 1976, when the AATS expects to review the entire matter, will be a stronger Seminary theologically and academically than it has been for many years.

Commenting on the AATS action, Dr. Bohlmann said the following: "The AATS action means that Concordia Seminary continues to be a fully accredited institution. Our students and perspective students can be assured that the education they receive at Concordia is of the highest quality." This statement of Dr. Bohlmann's is not due to any pressure or activity by the AATS, but springs from the desire of Dr. Bohlmann and the Board for Higher Education and the Board of Control to keep Concordia Seminary a theologically and academically excellent and responsible school.

Affirm commends Dr. Scharlemann, who for a time was Interim President, Dr. Robert Preus, who took over when Dr. Scharlemann became ill, and now Dr. Bohlmann and all others who have kept the Seminary going during these difficult times. We have no doubt that after the faculty majority walkout and all the continued opposition of a new Seminary on the campus of St. Louis University, our Seminary will emerge a stronger and better school of the prophets.

The Book of Jonah

BOTH before and after the New Orleans Convention Dr. J. A. O. Preus and those supporting his views on Scriptural interpretation were ridiculed by the secular press for their advocacy of the truth that Adam was the first living man and that Jonah was actually swallowed by a great fish which after three days spewed out the prophet, after which Jonah went and preached to Nineveh. The same charges have again been revived in connection with the suspension of Dr. Tietjen and the revolt of the majority faculty. Insistence on the acceptance of the historicity of Adam and Eve and the factuality of the events recorded in the Book of Jonah are cited as examples of an unreasonable type of literalism and of an erroneous type of Biblical interpretation that makes the Scriptures appear ridiculous in the eyes of intelligent people. As long as a person accepts the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the heart of the Christian faith, it is argued by the "moderates" that it does not matter how Genesis 1 and 2 are understood or in what manner the Book of Jonah is interpreted. Thus we have professors, theologians, pastors, teachers and laymen in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who claim that as long as one believes that God acts in judgment and grace, there are many passages, chapters, yea, even books, where completely differing interpretations are permissible. The denial of the historicity of Adam and of the events related in the Book of Jonah, it is argued, belongs to the area of "open questions" which the church has always recognized. These are issues concerning which, it is claimed, there ought to be openness and surely no ground for controversy leading to serious division and polarization.

Unfortunately, the matter of the historicity of Adam and the fact of the actual occurrence of the events recorded in the Book of Jonah are only a small part of a much larger problem, with which the news media are unacquainted or, if they are aware of it, are not informing the reading public as to the real issues that are involved. The two examples of interpretation frequently cited since January are like the tip of an iceberg, most of which is hidden from view.

A study of the history of the interpretation of the Book of Jonah reveals that both the Jewish synagogue and the Christian Church understood the events depicted in the four chapters of Jonah as actual happenings. It was only with the birth of a rationalistic type of Biblical criticism that the historical character of the experiences of Jonah came under attack.

THE stumbling block for the rationalists was the miracles of the book. An example of this view can be found in *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, edited by Madeleine S. and J. Lane Miller (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), where it is stated that "the history theory involves credulity concerning many debatable questions, viz. the punitive storm (1:4); Jonah's selection by lot (v.7), the sea calm (vv. 12, 15), Jonah's ejection safe and sound (2:10); the vigorous gourd (4:6)" (p. 345). Furthermore, since ancient history has left no records concerning the conversion of the people of Nineveh, nor do ancient Assyrian records refer to any Assyrian king called "the king of Nineveh" the historicity of the events of Jonah has been questioned. "In the prescientific era this literal interpretation was acceptable" (p. 345).

The questioning of Biblical miracles has serious implications for the Christian faith. The miracles in Jonah are no greater than many others that honeycomb Scripture. There are over 80 miracles interwoven in the historical and prophetic books of the Old Testament. Then there are the miracles performed by Christ and the apostles in Acts. The unique feature of the life of Christ is His supernatural person. The miracles of Jonah are just as credible as those of the crossing of the Red Sea, the crossing of the Jordan, manna coming down from heaven during the forty-year wilderness stay, the movements of the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, the virginal conception of Mary, the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus.

The fact that the ancient Jews accepted the historical nature of Jonah's experiences may be seen from Josephus' statement as found in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, IX, 10, 2. Christ connected His death, burial and resurrection directly with Jonah. Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees: "An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign; but no sign shall be given it except the sign of the Prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matthew 12:39-40). When Jesus used the word "sign" He was employing it as synonym for miracle. The stay of Jonah in the stomach of the great fish (that is what the Hebrew text of Jonah 1:17 states) was a prophetic type intended by God to be of the stay of His Son in the sepulcher. Just as God caused the big fish to spew out Jonah alive, so God caused the tomb to yield the dead body of Christ. An imaginary event would hardly be a true type for an actual and true event in the life of Christ.

FURTHERMORE, in Matthew 12:41-42 the historicity of another event of the Jonah account is assumed. Christ declared: "The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here." On the coming judgment day the men of Nineveh will arise and condemn the cities of Galilee that heard the proclamation of Jesus. But how could imaginary men, who never repented, because Jonah is never actually supposed to have preached to the Ninevites, arise and accuse the people of Jesus' generation? Jesus stated that the queen of the South would join the men of His generation and also participate in the judgment. The queen of the South, the Ninevites and the people of Galilee are all placed on the same historical level; all three are spoken of as people who really existed and lived.

Today as the result of a new type of criticism, known as "form criticism," the usual claim is made that the Book of Jonah was never intended to be an account of actual happenings, but that the anonymous author was using a special type of literary form (genre) to teach theological truth. Scholars, however, are not agreed as to what type of literary genre is represented in Jonah. Thus, some claim it is a parable; yet others aver that it is an

(Continued on Page 6)

Without Reservation

AN editorial in *MISSOURI IN PERSPECTIVE*, March 25, 1974, states: "Just for the record, we'll say it once again: We accept without reservation the Bible as the inspired, written Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions as a correct explanation of it. Enough said!"

The Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, to which every member of the Synod is required to subscribe, reads: "The Synod, and every member of the Synod, accepts without reservation: 1. The Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice; 2. All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God." At their ordination or installation all pastors and professors of the LC-MS solemnly pledge that all of their preaching and teaching will be in conformity with the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament and the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Some pastors and professors either do not know the meaning of the words, "without reservation", or they simply ignore them. Looking at their record, we find that it does not always agree with the record that God gave by the mouth of His prophets and apostles. For example, John the Baptist quotes Isaiah 40, verse 3, and declares that he is the one spoken of by *the prophet Isaiah*. (John 1:19-23.) Matthew affirms: "This is he that was spoken of by *the prophet Isaiah*." (Matthew 3:3.) Some pastors affiliated with ELIM and some professors of seminex do not believe that Isaiah wrote chapters 40 through 66 of the book that bears his name. They do not believe that Isaiah wrote, what has been called, *The Gospel According to Isaiah*, the 3rd chapter. They believe and teach that these chapters were written by some unknown Hebrew redactors, whom they refer to as Deutero-Isaiah and Trito-Isaiah. Looking at the Biblical record, we find that John the apostle quotes Isaiah 53, verse 1, at the saying of *Isaiah the prophet*." (John 12:37-38.) In his letter to the Romans Paul the apostle cites the same Scripture and ascribes it to Isaiah. (Romans 10:16.) Luke the evangelist records that, when Jesus stood up to read in the synagogue at Nazareth, there was delivered unto Him *the book of the prophet Isaiah*. After reading from the 61st chapter, Jesus said: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:16-21.) According to the 'Elimite' record, this prophecy, read by Jesus from the book of the prophet Isaiah, was not written by Isaiah.

His writer has a photostatic copy of the scroll of Isaiah discovered at the Dead Sea. He had the privilege of seeing the original scroll in the Shrine of the Book of Jerusalem. It has been dated as approximately 150 B.C. There is no evidence whatever from this ancient scroll that it ever was divided at chapter 40.

Christians believe and confess that the Holy Spirit, Whom Christ calls the Spirit of Truth, spoke by the prophets and apostles. This doctrine of the Holy Scriptures was not established by majority vote at a church convention. It is the clearly

revealed Word of God. (2 Peter 1:15-21; 2 Timothy 3:15-16; 2 Samuel 23:2; John 14:25-26; 1 Corinthians 2:12-14; Hebrews 1:1-2.) What Paul writes about Christ in his letter to the Colossians is equally true of the third person of the Trinity: "In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:3.) Let's give the Holy Spirit credit for possessing greater wisdom and knowledge than the doctors of philosophy and doctors of theology.

Among the men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, we Christians certainly include Isaiah, Matthew, Luke, John and Paul, who were quoted in this article. To deny the clearly revealed Word of God, as recorded by these men of God, is to question the credibility of the Holy Spirit. This is heresy, if not blasphemy, and cannot be tolerated in the Church of God.

The Rev. John H. Rische
Daly City, California

Scandalized Laymen

The following is an excerpt from "Vision," a publication of the Division of Parish Services, The South Wisconsin District, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod:

Speaking to the clergy of his church, C. S. Lewis insisted that lines must be drawn beyond which their doctrine will cease to be Anglican and/or Christian.

He continues, "I think it is your duty to fix the lines clearly in your own minds: and if you wish to go beyond them you must change your profession.

"This is your duty not specially as Christians or as priests but as honest men. There is a danger here of the clergy developing a special professional conscience which obscures the very plain moral issue. Men who have passed beyond these boundary lines . . . are apt to protest that they have come by their unorthodox opinions honestly. In defense of those opinions they are prepared to suffer obloquy and to forfeit professional advancement. Thus they come to feel like martyrs. But this simply misses the point which so gravely scandalizes the layman. We never doubted that your unorthodox opinions were honestly held: what we complain of is your continuing your ministry after you have come to hold them. We always knew that a man who makes his living as a paid agent of the Conservative Party may honestly change his views and honestly become a Communist. What we deny is that he can honestly continue to be a Conservative agent and to receive money from one party while he supports the policy of another."

You may draw your own applications. But it is obvious that the problems that beset us are not limited to our era or to our own denominational family.

The Rev. Karl L. Barth, President
The South Wisconsin District, LC-MS
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Congregational Autonomy and Synodical Loyalty

FROM the days of Walther forward, and on the basis of Scriptural teaching, our Synod has maintained the position that the congregation exists by *divine* right (*jure divino*) and an organization like the synod by human right (*jure humano*).

This means that a Christian congregation exists not merely as a result of Christian wisdom and expediency, but because God wanted it so. To worship together, to exercise fully the Office of the Keys (preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments), to establish the ministry in their midst, these are all God-ordained functions of the Christian congregation, that the spiritual needs of His flock might be met. It cannot avoid them. Nor, as a result, can it avoid the exercise of Christian discipline in its midst, and that means doctrinal supervision too.

A synod, on the other hand, is a voluntary association of Christian congregations formed by sister churches bound by a common faith, one in mind and one in teaching. Such fellowship is a God-pleasing thing, as we can see from the early church. (Eph. 4, 3-6; 1 Cor. 12, 7; Acts 15) Its primary purpose, therefore, was to further oneness in faith and fellowship in the church on earth. In addition, of course, there were the many benefits of joint working together; in missions; educating and training church workers, particularly pastors; publication of various materials, etc. Implicit in this kind of organization was the right of any congregation to sever its connection with the synod, if it was convinced that further fellowship compromised its doctrinal stance. By the same token, the synod could expel a member congregation whose teaching was not in harmony with its expressed platform of fellowship.

The Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod states these principles in careful detail; on the one hand, to protect the rights of the individual congregation; and, on the other hand, to allow itself the right to separate from itself a dissident congregation which has indicated that it is no longer willing to abide by, or further honor and uphold, the doctrinal stance of its fellow congregations. Before such final, drastic step is taken, there must, of course, be the necessary brotherly admonitions.

The Missouri Synod has always considered unity in doctrine its greatest asset. For the sake of the Gospel! And for the sake of remaining a truly Christian and Lutheran Confessional body! Walther urged that our Synod treasure "jealous concern for our unity in doctrine and faith." Yet never at the price of an "inquisitorial spirit, which can so easily convert the fraternal bond into oppressive iron shackles." But for Walther did this not mean indifference to doctrinal differences when such exist; for "mutual confidence," he stated, "prevents us from disregarding those differences in doctrine which become evident." These we must not "cover up" or "submerge" as though they did not exist, nor must we handle them as "open questions" and resort to "mutual compromises in order to remain outwardly united." (*Walther Speaks to the Church*, 18)

THIS was the spirit with which our Synod viewed its association of congregations for 125 years, and in this spirit it acted at New Orleans, not in order to impose "oppressive iron shackles," but that we might no longer "cover up" or "submerge" doctrinal differences. It was time to confront these boldly in all brotherly concern.

At New Orleans (1973 Convention), the delegates, *finally*, after years of patient listening and fraternal admonition, expressed their concurrence with Dr. Preus' explicit and solemn rallying-cry that the Synod "cannot *continue to profess one position* on Holy Scripture, while *tolerating attacks on that position* from those who have another position." Resolution 3-09 demonstrated and declared that the faculty (St. Louis) majority theological position was in violation of Article II of the Constitution.

If sharp dissent and disagreement have since resulted, it must be remembered that it was not this decision by the delegates which brought it about, but the differences in doctrine which had been building up over the years, daring year by year to become more bold, and finally clamoring openly for *Lebensraum* in the Synod.

In line with the Reformation and Missouri's forefathers, our Synod declared once more that unity at any price is not its way. While peace was most desirable, it would be foolish, as Walther put it, "to seek peace first and then truth." *That's where Luther stood! And that's where we must stand!* That's the only way for a Confessional church and for Christians bound by those Confessions! "Our treasure is not our *size* but rather our *unity in doctrine*," Walther emphasized. (*Walther Speaks to the Church*, 23)

The dissident faculty members and students, and all those who have supported them, have acted in disregard and contempt for Synod and its Constitution under which they claim to stand. To appeal at this point to the autonomy of the congregation as justification for their defiant repudiation of the Synod's earnest calling to account on matters of doctrinal deviation is audacious belligerence.

NOBODY questions what Walther made quite clear in his day already, that "the choice of a synod is a matter of freedom." BUT if an individual—or individuals, or congregation, or congregations—"does not wish to belong to a synod that calls him to account, well, let him stand alone." (*Walther Speaks to the Church*, 31)

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Autonomy . . .

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The conditions of membership in Synod, voluntarily subscribed to, are very plainly stated in the Constitution. Also very clear are the channels which dissidents may follow, if and when they oppose synodically adopted resolutions.

By no stretch of the imagination can dissident faculty members and students—also district presidents, pastors, and congregations who agree with them—claim to be honoring and upholding their Synod when they frustrate and impede its agreed upon By-Laws which are intended to expedite the Synod's business and programs in an orderly way. *Ought this not also be a matter of serious conscience scruple, for the sake of fraternal relations?*

Congregations have every right to exercise their freedom and part company with the Synod, if they no longer agree with it. But they have no right to aid and abet rebellious factions who disrupt the Synod's authorized schools, nor lay aside and ignore the rules by which vicars and candidates for the ministry are certified—at least not if they still want to claim membership in Synod! And particularly those in Synod's employ ought to remember that they have no Constitutional right to disregard the Constitution, until and when they have in *de facto* way shown that the Synod itself is in violation of its Constitutional rules. If they so deeply disagree with the Synod and its doctrinal stance, *then the honorable thing for them to do, in Walther's words, is to "stand alone."* For, "we do not hold him," reminds Walther; "but as long as he is with us and wants to belong to our free union, he must submit to the Constitution."

The issue is not the autonomy of the individual congregation! Let's keep this perfectly clear. It is this rather, whether those who have subscribed to Synod's Constitution can rightly be held accountable to it! Indeed, they should and must. And if they refuse, then by their action they indicate unwillingness to "walk together" any longer, and their decision is to "stand alone."

A "synod" is a synod only as long as people are willing to walk together, with one mind, with one faith, with one voice, perfectly joined together. (cp. 1 Cor. 1, 10)

Doctrine, as Luther reminds us, is of God, and it is perfect and pure, because He gave it. *There's nothing unclear about it, because God is not the Author of Doubt and Confusion.* Therefore, it was Luther's deep conviction: I must love His doctrine, His teaching, with all my heart. *If I let false or uncertain teaching stand, and do not hate it, I hate God!* (cp. *Luther's Works* 12, 194)

This is how serious the matter really is. God has spoken and He has spoken plainly in His Word. The man of faith listens attentively and obediently, and he does not quibble with God's Word, because it is of God and not of men.

Dr. Eugene F. Klug
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

Jonah . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

allegory; still others believe it is a piece of propaganda writing, written especially to counteract the religious narrow-mindedness of books like Ezra, Nehemiah and Malachi, where intermarriages with non-Jewish people are forbidden and denounced.

The late Professor Aalders of the Free University of Amsterdam has examined the claim that Jonah is not an historical book and scrutinized the claim that here Biblical readers find a special kind of literary type, such as parable or allegory. Aalders has shown that strictly speaking Biblical parables have one central thought and are not too long. In the Old Testament we have the following parables: 2 Sam. 12:1-4; 2 Sam. 14:6-7; Judg. 9:8-15; 1 Kings 20:39-40. The context reveals that they are parables and that they are short. Jonah, on the other hand extends over four chapters and is also composite, because the Book of Jonah contains two major episodes: 1. the flight of the prophet from God and his swallowing by a great fish; 2. the ejection by the fish, Jonah's preaching at Nineveh and his dissatisfaction at the repentance of Nineveh.

Other scholars have considered the Book of Jonah an allegory. According to this interpretation Israel failed to carry out its obligations to share God's Word with other nations and because of this failure was swallowed up by the world-power Babylon. After Judah was freed from captivity, it became impatient with Yahweh's longsuffering and expected God to punish their pagan neighbors. However, if we compare the allegories that are found in following Old Testament books: Eccl. 12:3-6; Jer. 25:15-29; Ezek. 27:3-10; 19:2-9; 24:3-5 and Zech. 11:4-17, it will readily be seen from them, as well as the context in which they appear, that they are allegories. No such indications can be found relative to the contents of Jonah.

In *The Proceedings of the 46th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*, Detroit, Michigan, June 16-26, 1965 the delegates were asked "to reaffirm the historicity of the Jonah account," and did pass. A portion of the doctrinal resolution stated, "Whereas, The answer to this question is significant for the preaching and teaching of the Book of Jonah; therefore be it resolved That the Synod affirm its conviction that the events recorded in the Book of Jonah did occur as shown by—

- a) historical data in the book itself;
- b) our Lord's reference to Jonah and Nineveh in the New Testament (Matt. 12:38-42; Luke 11:29-32;)" etc.

This resolution was not passed during the Preus administration but while Dr. Oliver Harms was synodical president.

Dr. Raymond F. Surburg
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

The Question of Commitment

ONE of the great gifts that God has given His Church in the past decade has been the method of training people in evangelism devised by Dr. James Kennedy. Through the use of this method many of our members have experienced the thrill and joy of sharing the Gospel with another individual in a one-to-one situation. Many have gained a high degree of self confidence through the process of going along with an experienced person and learning by observation and doing.

However, despite the obvious advantages and successes, many Lutheran pastors shy away from becoming involved in this type of training program. The reason given is that they encounter difficulties in the presentation as given in Kennedy's book "Evangelism Explosion." The primary cause for concern is the use which Dr. Kennedy makes of commitment. Closely associated with this is the manner in which an evaluation is made of an individual's spiritual condition largely on the basis of answers to two questions.

It is Biblical and confessional to ask for a commitment following a Gospel presentation? Can the answers to the two questions concerning hope for eternal life be put to good and proper use? The answers to both questions are yes, but if, and only if, the evangelist properly understands his or her role, and commitment is used in the proper perspective.

Dr. Kennedy, both explicitly and by implication, compares the evangelist to a salesman. The first task that the 'salesman' faces is determining whether or not the individual needs the 'product' he is 'selling.' He does this by asking the two questions. If the 'prospects' indicate that they are not certain if they will go to heaven when they die, and if works are indicated as a way of getting there, then the 'seller' automatically assumes that these are non-Christians in need of conversion. In other words, they need the 'product.'

THE 'salesman' then proceeds to present his 'product,' the Gospel message, in whatever detail may be required. At the completion he makes certain that the 'customer' understands what has been said, and then proceeds to 'clinch the deal.' Just as a secular salesman must get the customer's name on the line before the sale is completed, so it is felt that this must also take place here spiritually. The signature is affixed through the use of commitment. Conversion takes place only if a commitment prayer is spoken, and therefore the 'salesman' will go to great lengths in order to obtain this verbal promise. If he doesn't succeed, he leaves feeling dejected because he thinks that he failed in his task.

The analogy sounds very reasonable, and for that reason is often used. Unfortunately, it breaks down in its latter phases and thereby gets us into theological difficulties. To state, or even imply, that a person must do something to be converted is not scriptural, and therefore neither confessional or Lutheran.

St. Paul clearly states several times that we were dead in trespasses and sin, and made alive only through Christ (Eph. 2:1). Only a living person can speak.

Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born again if he is to enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:3). A baby's first cry comes after birth, after the lungs are filled with air. So also that first spiritual cry comes after birth—after the spiritual lungs have been filled by the breath of the Holy Spirit. It can be a cry of repentance and pain—it may be an expression of recognition—or it might be the sobbing of hunger and longing. In any case, the cry is that of someone who has been born spiritually. Conversion has already taken place.

If you have any doubts concerning the validity of the forego-

ing, then read again the *Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article II, Free Will*. Just one brief quotation from section 24 might suffice: "In his own conversion or regeneration he (natural man) can as little begin, effect, or cooperate in anything as a stone, or block, or a lump of clay could." Natural man can do but one thing, and that is resist.

HOW then can we overcome this difficulty involving commitment? By recognizing the proper role of the evangelist, and thereby removing the pressures which have been placed upon them. The previous analogy is valid only if we recognize that the role of the salesman is filled by the Holy Spirit. The evangelist is merely the satisfied customer who goes along to provide the testimony. God has instructed us to tell—not sell. A witness is not the same as a salesman.

It is the Holy Spirit who leads us to a prospect. The Holy Spirit examines the answers and evaluates the response of the heart, thereby determining if the 'product' is needed. We merely use the two questions as a means of introducing the spiritual message, therefore there is no need to press for an answer. It is the Holy Spirit who gets the name on the line, we merely observe the process taking place.

How do we know if the 'sale' or conversion has taken place? By listening for the cry of that spiritual baby—an expression of longing to have Jesus as their Savior—a murmur of sorrow as the realization of their unworthiness is felt.

Assuming that the 'contract' has been 'signed,' then one more task remains for the evangelist. He or she must help the 'customer' realize that he possesses the 'product,' and then show him how to assemble it and use it so that he might realize its full potential.

It is here that commitment plays a vital and valid role. It now fulfills its proper role, as a tool to be used for sanctification, not conversion. Somehow the person must be reassured that conversion has taken place, that an eternity with God is now a reality. What better way than to lead them in a brief commitment prayer, asking God to help them turn over to Him as much of their life as is possible at this point in time. In the process, they should be helped to realize that spiritual growth is a slow process that requires constant nourishment from His Word.

THIS is Biblical, and therefore Lutheran. In Rom. 10:9 we are told that "if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." I do not believe that these are words of instruction from God that tell us what we must do in order to be converted. That would be contrary to the rest of Scripture. Rather, I believe that these words were intended to help us obtain the full assurance of our salvation—to help us realize that we are converted—and thereby obtain the peace and comfort that goes with it. Only people who have been already converted can make that confession with their lips, and have that belief in their hearts.

If you have postponed a 'Kennedy-type' evangelism training program because you could not agree with the philosophy of conversion through commitment, then why not restructure it slightly and give it a try . . . If you do try it, then do not feel discouraged if the 'sale' is not made in your presence. God has His own times and uses His own means. Neither should you boast of success. You were merely the tool that God used. But—what a way to be used!!

Richard Korthals
Arcadia, Michigan

Academic Freedom

ACADEMIC freedom, defined as an academician's freedom to teach and publish his conclusions in his field of competence without any restriction, unless it be the disapproval of his peers, is established as a "right" by no law of God, no law of nature, no principle of the federal constitution, and no legislation. It is simply a general principle developed in the academic community and allowed by public opinion as being generally helpful.

But what society at large grants as a privilege to be applied responsibly in secular fields of learning, a segment of that society such as a religious organization may obviously limit, in fact must limit, in the interest of maintaining its identity and the loyalty of its members to its special group commitments. Synod exists as a voluntary group of congregations committed to whatever Scripture, the written Word of God, asserts and teaches. Synod is committed to the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. To grant any license, any academic freedom, for denying or questioning clear assertions of Scripture, the written Word of God, is abandonment of this foundation and the destruction of the historic character of Synod.

Paradoxically, it is the truly Lutheran academician's highest freedom to be bound and captive to Synod's Scriptural and Confessional commitments. He is liberated from the marshes of subjectivity and emotionalism and from the mazes of rationalistic, humanistic thought. He is liberated for thinking the Spirit's thoughts after Him and for bringing all his own thinking into subjection to the mind of Christ as revealed in the Scripture Word of truth.

In Perspective?

Missouri in Perspective published a picture of the St. Louis Seminary May 24th graduation. It was "made" to look as if almost no one attended—the picture was taken before the service began. Interesting is the fact that the picture was taken by a SEMINEX student employed by Concordia Seminary to take graduation pictures. Needless to say, he was not employed to take a picture which was to embarrass the school and misrepresent it. The former Public Relations man under John Tietjen, persuaded the student photographer, employed by the Seminary, to take such a picture and then give it to MIP for publication. Concordia Seminary never saw this picture and never authorized any pictures to be sent to SEMINEX. Incidentally, the MIP article said less than 300 attended the graduation when according to the precise count by Concordia staff 700 were in attendance.

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Springfield IL 62702

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Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

All correspondence, editorial material, contributions, and communications about subscriptions should be addressed to:

Affirm

c/o Walther Memorial Lutheran Church
4040 West Fond du Lac Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216

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For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

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A Time To Build

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." Thus begins Ecclesiastes chapter three, followed by "a time to," repeated 28 times in groups of two. "A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to get and a time to lose, etc."

In this series the perfect word for Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, this past year is, "A time to break down, and a time to build up." First the surgeon wounds, then comes healing. A carpenter cuts away termite-ridden beams so that strengthening and renovation may follow.

There has been "a time to break down" at the seminary. Fifteen years or more of gradual doctrinal deterioration finally surfaced. The increased use of the Historical-Critical Method of Biblical interpretation with its uncertainty as to source, authority, inspiration, and reliability of the Bible had found its way into parish pulpits via some of each year's graduates. Finally at New Orleans the Synod said, "it is enough."

A month later a new Board of Control started its work. Almost endless, it seems, were the agonizing decisions, parliamentary delays, threats of lawsuits, consultations with the Commission on Theology and Church Relations for doctrinal opinions, and rulings from the Commission on Constitutional Matters.

In January the suspension of the school's president, a temporary action while charges against him could be processed properly and constitutionally, signaled a walk-out by a majority of students and faculty in a massive rebellion unprecedented in Synod's history and probably in modern church history. Calculated efforts were made to bring the Board of Control to its knees and, failing that, to close the school. Propaganda was directed to our Ft. Wayne Senior College, major source of St. Louis seminary students, to turn students elsewhere. Vicars in their year of field work were urged not to return to St. Louis for their senior year.

When the American Association of Theological Schools lifted the two-year probation against the seminary's accreditation, we had the sad spectacle of the suspended president attending the AATS convention at Atlanta in mid-June in an effort to destroy the school's accreditation.

Indeed, "a time to break down."

But through it all God was good, so very good. What was humanly impossible happened. God kept the school open. We learned that grace and strength, like bread, come on a daily basis. When the acting president suffered nervous exhaustion after the toughest 84 days in the school's history, another man held the fort for 35 difficult days until God gave us another acting president. Men full of years but young in spirit came out of retirement to teach again. St. Louis area men gave of time and energy as guest lecturers. The faculty was labeled "make-shift" by some. But, behold! More than 75 percent had Ph. D. degrees,

the highest percentage in the school's history. Quality education was maintained even in a "time to break down."

And now it is "a time to build up."

A fine summer school program had approximately 130 enrolled in each of the two sessions. Men grew in knowledge. Spiritual batteries were re-charged.

There will be a good student body this fall. Here are a few figures as of July 1. Of the 1973-74 vicars, 40 have sorted fact from fiction in the letter barrage directed to them and have enrolled for their final year at Concordia.

What about new students? Most of them normally come from Ft. Wayne. Despite adverse efforts from both within and without that school, would you believe that 36 kept their spiritual, mental, and synodical moorings and will be with us in September? There will also be a few graduates from other colleges and universities. We will have a first year class of over 50.

Seminex students who have gone home for the summer are out of the psyched-up confines of group action and away from the super-heated St. Louis atmosphere. They have time to talk with dad and mom and to think it through with their home pastors. May it please God to turn some of those hearts and minds.

What, then, is the estimated on-campus student body for school opening in September? A cautious man would say 150. An optimistic soul would say as high as 180. To those figures one must add the graduate students. Truly, "a time for building."

But what about faculty? Again, God has been good. The building material is available. The Missouri Synod has a wealth of talent. We are looking for, finding, and calling men of high caliber in their respective fields. They have academic degrees aplenty, a doctrinal stance that is solidly Missourian, and a theological humility that says, "Speak Lord, for Thy servant heareth." How heart-warming it was for the Board of Control to interview 14 top-quality men!

Thus far 7 men, often at personal sacrifice, have been added to the existing faculty. Others have not yet reached a decision. But this we know, in September we shall have a fine God-given faculty for a fine God-given student body. We count on your prayers for them as they together teach and learn so that they may serve God and the church.

"A time to break down and a time to build up."

There is only one fitting response to all this. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever."

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Quincy, Illinois
Chairman, Board of Control
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri

Why I Accepted A Call To Concordia Seminary

Recently under the guidance of the Holy Spirit I made what was virtually one of the easiest decisions of my life. The choice was between a Distinguished Service Professorship with tenure at a sizable salary and an Associate Professorship with a two-year term at a marked reduction in remuneration.

(Incidentally, the implications of *Missouri In Perspective*—that I was “bribed” to accept, or “rewarded” for accepting, by an advance in salary and rank, and that I was “screened” previously concerning my opinion on Resolution 3-09 so that any function on an important committee appears to be “rigged”—are not only directly contrary to the facts, but also scurrilous and libelous, casting such aspersions on my integrity that the impression erroneously and stupidly given is tantamount to professional suicide in scholarly circles. The facts are: Neither in my interview nor at any other time was I asked any question regarding my attitude on Resolution 3-09. My rank was not and has not been changed, nor has my remuneration been altered. I received only one letter concerning pecuniary recompense, and that letter arrived more than two weeks after I accepted the Call.)

But, to return to the theme, “Why I Accepted a Call to Concordia Seminary,” the basis for my decision may be summarized in one word—**OPPORTUNITY**. Over against any material advantages of professional standing, security of tenure and pecuniary remuneration, stood the **OPPORTUNITY** to work daily with the Word of God and assist more directly in the training at Concordia Seminary of future missionaries, pastors, teachers, and other servants of the Word and Sacrament. The Call to such service so clearly illuminated the ramifications involved in the choice that my decision was virtually one of the easiest of my life. It was no doubt an easier decision than that of many of my colleagues who must decide whether their service is needed more at Concordia Seminary or in their present position either as a pastor of a congregation or as a teacher in one of our sister institutions.

The **OPPORTUNITY** to serve at Concordia Seminary, furthermore, is particularly challenging at the present time in view of the current crisis in the Missouri Synod. It is now that our church needs servants to assist in the rebuilding process at Concordia Seminary. It is now that our Lord is calling on the resources within our synod—both, resources being used currently in other “arms” of the church as well as latent resources previously prepared for more direct service in His kingdom—to come forth and assist the seminary which God has blessed so bountifully for one hundred and thirty-five years. Not only is Concordia Seminary “likely to survive” (as acknowledged by a news reporter not known for any sympathy to our cause), Concordia Seminary *has* survived and *will* survive what historians probably will term the crisis in her history—in spite of unfriendly press reports and attempts by “fellow” Lutherans at “discrediting” the institution—simply because God both is calling servants with certain God-given talents out of the “woodwork” of the church to assist in the rebuilding process at Concordia Seminary, and He is blessing their endeavors, as it has become very evident and clear to one who has witnessed and participated in the activities at Concordia Seminary during the spring quarter and the June session of the summer school.

There is an additional **OPPORTUNITY** in my positive decision regarding the Call to teach at Concordia Seminary. I refer to my thirty-five years of experience as a graduate student and as an instructor in the Greek and Latin classics and the **OPPORTUNITY** of applying this experience to the current basic problem confronting our synod, other Lutheran church-bodies and in reality confronting all branches of Christianity—the

problem of the reliability of Scripture. I have studied in detail the skeptical approach in classical philology during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the “Homeric Question” and to the genuineness of the Platonic dialogues. Avoiding the details, I may summarize the history of classical scholarship by noting that the extremely skeptical attitude of the two previous centuries has proved to be subjective, exaggerated and in many cases not even scholarly or scientific. The pendulum in classical research has swung back—that is, away from source-hypothesis in Homer and away from the rejection of the genuineness of the majority of Plato’s dialogues. So the current skeptical attitude toward much of the New Testament (and of the Old Testament) is not a new discovery or a new problem—although it seems to be new and the “in-thing” to some of the past professors from Concordia Seminary. I see, in brief, my Call to Concordia Seminary as an **OPPORTUNITY** to demonstrate in a small way that the traditional position (that is, the position generally held before the onslaught of modern “scholarship”) is based on genuine scholarship rather than on any emotional premise of “Wir bleiben beim Alten.”

Allow me to mention what I consider another **OPPORTUNITY** in accepting the Call to Concordia Seminary. I refer to the possibility—and I pray it will become a reality—of discussing the issues (avoiding the political procedures and the personality clashes) with my fellow Christians at Seminex and in ELIM, many of whom were personal friends of mine during our days at the seminary, and with whom I currently remain on sincerely friendly terms. I am bold enough to pray and hope (to convert a popular phrase to the order of importance) that we will have and will take the **OPPORTUNITY** of discussing the issues calmly, candidly and humbly with a view to delineate between apparent disagreements and actual divergence in theology, and between acceptable variance and divisive difference in doctrine, if such exists, always under the tutelage of God’s Holy inspired inerrant Word.

I have mentioned the great **OPPORTUNITIES** in serving at Concordia Seminary. I do so in all humility, for the other side of the same coin involves equally large **RESPONSIBILITIES** on the shoulders of the faculty and administration of Concordia Seminary in the current process of rebuilding. My contemplation of the huge **RESPONSIBILITIES** coupled with the awareness of my own deficiencies caused me to pause, to hesitate, and to consider in all honesty the declining of the Call—in spite of the tremendous **OPPORTUNITIES**. I found the antidote to my fear and trepidation in the Scriptural comfort and assurance that we at Concordia Seminary will be mere agents of our Heavenly Father, God, Who so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son as our Redeemer (John 3:16), also has promised through Jesus to send us His Holy Spirit, Who will guide us into all truth (John 16:13). My fears of the tremendous **RESPONSIBILITIES** were soon allayed by the promises of God’s Word. Since God bestows on us the guidance of the Spirit, my fear and trepidation soon changed to courage and confidence. I readily accepted, thanking Him for the **OPPORTUNITIES**, confidently accepting His guidance in meeting the **RESPONSIBILITIES**, humbly giving all credit and glory to Him in the rebuilding of Concordia Seminary.

I request and urge, in conclusion, the prayers of the pastors, teachers and lay members of our church, and I repeat the concluding paragraphs from my letter of acceptance, dated Pentecost Sunday, June 20, 1974:

Throughout my career as teacher and scholar I have prefaced my work each day with the prayer

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The District Conventions

Since "A District is the Synod itself performing the functions of the Synod" (Bylaw 3.07) the resolutions and decisions of the various Districts as they meet in convention are important and instructive.

At this writing not all District conventions have met, nor are there at hand the detailed proceedings of those that have been held. Nonetheless, a spot check is of interest.

By and large, the tendency held good to retain an incumbent, especially the District president.

Predictable were the elections and actions of Districts with a somewhat liberal history and vocal liberal leadership such as Atlantic, New England, Southeastern, etc. ELIM and dissident former faculty members and students were voted support and encouragement. In several instances District presidents were authorized to place Seminex graduates in congregations in clear violation of synodical regulations.

Equally predictable were a number of conservative Districts. The big Michigan District, for example, returned President Schlecht to office with a solid vote, together with other able conservative officers. One evidence of the staunchness of Michigan lies in a resolution asking Synod in 1975 to make it synodical policy that "all who continue their active support for ELIM be declared ineligible for synodical office or divine call into the preaching and teaching ministries of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod."

Aside from the predictable, several Districts showed an interesting pattern of returning to office a mildly liberal president, but at the same time electing solidly conservative vice-presidents and other officers.

In Nebraska, for example, President Niedner, not noted for a conservative approach to such synodical problems as the Seminex graduates and related matters, was returned to office, but only by a hairline margin of 1.2 percent. His election could not have happened without the voting support of many delegates whose basic theological stance is conservative and in full support of synodical resolutions. Substantiation for this is clear from the fact that the convention then proceeded to elect two out of three conservative vice-presidents, including Pastor Harlan Harnapp, one of the two pastors who have filed formal charges against St. Louis seminary president Tietjen.

Nebraska seemed to be saying, "We recognize the services of our District president, but we also want no one under any illusion regarding the fundamental conservatism of our District."

The Missouri District followed a somewhat similar pattern, though with the added factor of a division between the St. Louis area and the rest of the District, plus some confusion as to whether the presidency would be full-time or part-time. President Scherer, who does not support the conservative majority on the St. Louis seminary Board of Control, was re-elected by a slim margin of approximately one percent. Thereupon the convention spoke with clear tones in electing four conservative vice presidents, one of whom was a member of Committee 3 at New Orleans.

In North Wisconsin liberal incumbent president Goetz chose not to run. The newly elected president, of somewhat lower profile, now has vice-presidents, all of whom are conservatives, including Rev. Leonard Buelow, one of the pastors who has filed charges against seminary president Tietjen.

For a somewhat different pattern, at least two Districts can be cited. In Indiana the elections were a clean sweep for the conservatives and President Zimmermann was returned to office by a large majority.

Similarly, in Central Illinois the convention's conservative majority left no doubt as to the District's stance. Even though previously the incumbent president really had not been outspoken in support of "moderate" views, the District insisted that a middle-of-the-road position was not to its liking. The result was that Rev. Arthur Kuehnert, unashamedly conservative in word and deed, was elected. The conservative trumpet continued its clear sound with the election of two conservative vice-presidents, together with two pastors and two laymen on the District Board of Directors. The District's executive secretary for Education and Youth Work, a member of ELIM's Board of Directors, was given until July 1 to make a choice between his ELIM position and his District office.

To sum up, the returns on the District conventions are incomplete and a full analysis remains to be done. However, certain facts emerge from even a limited spot check.

Certain Districts acted and reacted with the predictability of Epiphany following Christmas. Liberally oriented Districts, trumpeting their position with a bravado that seemed somewhat like the whistling of a small boy passing a cemetery at night, re-elected liberal officers and passed resolutions in support of anything that gave the appearance of saying to Synod, "You can't tell us what to do."

Other Districts, oriented to a solid support of Synod's historic position, pursued their quiet way—conservative Districts somehow have quieter conventions—and supported officers and resolutions which left no doubt as to their position.

Then we have a number of Districts that stayed with their incumbent presidents for various reasons, but surrounded them with conservative vice-presidents and other officers.

Liberals, to be sure, benefitted by the rule of thumb, "vote-for-the-incumbent-unless-we-just-can't-stand-him." But the other side of the coin is the fact that at the District conventions conservatives maintained the same fundamental character so clearly evidenced at New Orleans. They are not given to being noisy. It is not their style to engage in demonstrations and emotional histrionics. They are quiet, they listen, they think with their heads rather than their gall-bladders, and they vote.

The conservative center of Missouri again showed itself. As time goes on and facts are increasingly sifted from fiction in the present doctrinal controversy, the solid center will continue to grow, flourish, and be heard from.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

Call . . . (Continued from Page 2)

that the Holy Spirit somehow may bless my endeavors to the glory of our Savior and the benefit of His Church. I am most grateful, therefore, for the opportunity to labor more directly in the preparation of ministers of the Gospel during the remaining years of my career.

May Christ bestow upon me and all of our colleagues a generous portion of His Holy Spirit, as on the original Pentecost, to guide us as teachers and scholars, and may our Lord grant us health to continue for many years in service to His Kingdom.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Prof. Robert G. Hoerber
Concordia Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

Seminex Power Play At Atlanta

When the former faculty majority at Concordia Seminary walked off their jobs, violated their divine calls and refused to teach unless suspended president Dr. John Tietjen was reinstated, this was a raw power play of vast proportions. But it seemed likely to succeed. The faculty knew that only two professors would remain on the job teaching and it would be virtually impossible for them, even with much help from men on leave and others, to carry on the functions of the school. Furthermore, three-fourths of the students had just the day before refused to attend classes until all professors were either exonerated or found guilty of false doctrine by the Board of Control. Their goal was to break the back of the seminary, close it down, and thus force the Board to capitulate, give in to all the majority faculty demands, and thus abdicate their authority.

This power play, accompanied by constant harassment before and after the exodus to the campus of Jesuit St. Louis University, was deftly and energetically executed. During the weeks before the departure the majority faculty and their student followers literally took over the campus—the classrooms, the chapel, the meeting rooms, etc. Interim president Scharlemann was helpless to discharge his duties as president. Valuable records and names of prospective students were taken away.

But Concordia Seminary continued to function with 105 students and only one day of classes missed. The power play had failed!

But a second power play was already in motion. The AATS (American Association of Theological Schools) had long before been brought into the affairs of our seminary. It had already placed Concordia on probation because of alleged outside influence upon the Board of Control. Now the AATS was being pressed to cut off our accreditation completely. It was a great disappointment to suspended president Tietjen and his colleagues at Seminex when the Commission on Accrediting of the AATS continued the full accreditation of the seminary, and merely imposed another probation on the basis of present understandable deficiencies which can easily be met in the next year and a half.

Again the power play, calculated to discredit the Board of Control and destroy the operation of Concordia, had failed. Tietjen resigned from his position with the AATS.

Recently a third and even more brutal display of power has been used to ruin Concordia. It happened at the 29th biennial meeting of the AATS at Atlanta, June 17-19. On this occasion the Association itself, consisting of all the member schools of the AATS, was inveigled into meddling with the internal affairs of a great church body and a member school, although this is not the Association's concern or function. Spurred on by suspended president John Tietjen who was present throughout the meeting, and by Lutheran professors from seminaries outside our Synod, and grossly misinformed about the affairs of our Synod and our school, the Association passed some very judgmental and some very irresponsible resolutions.

The Association expressed its "gratitude" to the three institutions—St. Louis University, Eden Seminary and the Chicago Lutheran School of Theology—which helped the dissident faculty majority to create and sustain a "seminary" in opposition to Concordia and dedicated to its overthrow. The Association further expressed its "support" for Dr. Tietjen, even though he was suspended by the Board of Control for the extremely serious charges of false doctrine and malfeasance in office. The final act of affrontery to the Board of Control and our entire Synod was to declaim that "grave injustice" had been done to the faculty and administrators who are now carrying out their work at Seminex in opposition to Concordia Seminary and the Missouri Synod. No

evidence was offered for such "grave injustice;" but then any discussion of evidence for such charges might have caused many of the uninitiated in that politically charged meeting not to vote as they did.

We can perhaps excuse the delegates there in Atlanta for their action. The internal problems of Seminex and Concordia Seminary were not on their original agenda, and they were not given honest information. Furthermore, the din of Seminex propaganda which identified walking away from one's calling with forced exile had no doubt been effective among unwary and sentimental clergymen who may mistakenly look on the AATS as a sort of protective professors' union.

It is more difficult however, to excuse the delegates when they refused to adopt the following amendment by Dr. E. Dale Dunlap of Kansas City:

Be it further resolved that the Association express its sympathy for those members of the Concordia Seminary community who, through the agonizing of consciences, have been led to continue to work in the interests of responsible theological education within that community.

Dr. Dunlap was speaking of those who are now professors and students at Concordia. Perhaps we can excuse the Association even for such a lack of Christian charity in not approving this amendment. For the Association does not see itself as a Christian Association. It is interesting that when the same Dr. Dunlap proposed an amendment to encourage all of us in the Missouri Synod to seek reconciliation "through the grace of God and in the Spirit of Jesus Christ," the amendment was withdrawn as offensive to Jews who also belong to the AATS. Significantly, it was a Lutheran, Dr. Krister Stendahl of Harvard University, who brought this matter to the attention of the Association, and got the amendment withdrawn.

But no one can excuse the representative of Seminex, Dr. John Tietjen, and the many non-Missouri Synod Lutheran professors for what they did at Atlanta. They had one purpose in mind: to discredit and destroy Concordia Seminary. The resolution supporting Seminex and omitting any support for Concordia Seminary in her present difficulties was brought in by Dr. William Weiblen, a Lutheran, President of Wartburg Theological Seminary. The motion to make public the entire action of the AATS in imposing a second probation on Concordia was brought in by Dr. Stendahl. Such an action, unprecedented in the AATS, was calculated to embarrass Concordia.

On another occasion ten Lutheran representatives moved a resolution, asking the Association to call upon the Board of Control at Concordia Seminary "to restore the suspended president (Tietjen) and dismissed faculty of the Seminary." Arrogant affrontery! This resolution lost overwhelmingly.

Just a few minutes before the close of the meeting the same ten Lutherans, once again spurred on by the suspended president of Concordia Seminary, made its final attempt to destroy Concordia. They brought in the following resolution:

WHEREAS, what happened at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, since the June 2, 1972, imposition of probation has brought radical changes in matters of essential concern to this Association and its accrediting procedures—specifically the faculty, the education process, the administration, and the ethos of the learning community so that the *de jure* situation is in flagrant conflict with the *de facto* situation;

and WHEREAS, the present theological educational enterprise carried on at 801 DeMun Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri,

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Confessional Theology and Academic Freedom

There's no such thing as complete freedom anywhere. "Your freedom of action ends where my nose begins." And there's no such thing as complete Academic Freedom.

Academic Freedom is limited first of all by academic competence. Academicians, it is generally agreed, should not speak outside their areas of competence. A physicist is not competent to make authoritative pronouncements in the field of genetics. One of the most controversial figures in the academic world today is a man who is charged with making pronouncements on the basic intellectual ability of racial groups even though he is not an authority in that field.

One of the Synodical colleges has an excellent statement on this particular aspect of Academic Freedom. It reads "No teacher may claim as his right the privilege of discussing in his classroom controversial topics obviously and clearly outside his own field of scholarly competence. The teacher is morally bound not to take advantage of his position by introduction into the classroom of provocative discussions of subjects completely irrelevant to his academic field of competence. The college recognizes that the teacher in speaking and writing outside of the institution upon subjects beyond the scope of his own field of study is entitled to precisely the same freedom of expression as applies to all other citizens and is subject to the same responsibility as attaches to all other citizens."

Academic Freedom must also be limited in a church supported school by confessional commitment. It is this limitation that has received greatest attention and greatest publicity. But it should be noted as we have pointed out that this is not the only limitation on academic freedom. And it should also be noted that the academic community itself has insisted on enforcing this other limitation especially when men have violated it in speaking out on controversial topics.

The limitations of Academic Freedom because of confessional commitment have attracted a great deal of attention because most of our private institutions of higher education began under church auspices, many of them for the precise purpose of preparing men for the ministry of the church. The American Association of University Professors came into being primarily to protect Academic Freedom. They have recognized the validity of this limitation. Their celebrated 1940 statement includes the sentence "Limitations of academic freedom because of the religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment." Since the time of its initial adoption this statement has been endorsed by 62 other associations. It is accepted by the various regional accrediting agencies and also by the American Association of Theological Schools.

There's no question as to the validity and acceptability of limitations imposed by confessional commitment: it's recognized that a man is not free to teach what he wishes. A supporting agency has a right to expect him to teach what it believes; it has set up the institution for study and research but also for the perpetuation of its own commitment.

Whatever limitations the faculty member is expected to follow are to be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment. The Synodical Handbook imposes the same requirement: Section 6.53f states "Limitations of academic freedom because of the religious and confessional nature and aims of the institution shall be stated in writing at the time of the appointment and conveyed to the person being appointed." This requirement has not always been followed; some Synodical institutions have

faithfully included a statement of limitations, others have included only a very general statement.

Recently the Board for Higher Education developed a statement on limitations of Academic Freedom which it has asked be included in all calls and contracts. A number of individuals and some faculties have raised questions about the validity and adequacy of the BHE statement. A careful study of the statement will show that except for the definition of "peer group" which is taken from a CTCR document all the significant words and phrases are taken from convention resolutions.

Have Boards of Control been negligent in not including carefully worked out statements of limitations on Academic Freedom? Possibly this has been the case, but it may well be that Boards assumed familiarity with and acceptance of convention resolutions. One phrase which occurs again and again in convention resolutions dealing with the Synod's doctrinal position and public teaching is the plea that "by the mercies of God" the Synodically-accepted doctrinal statements be honored and upheld. In this connection it is worth noting the statement made in the recently published *HANDBOOK OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION*. The author says "It can be argued that academic freedom is at stake when a faculty member is prohibited from speaking out on behalf of a policy which is in opposition to the religious principles of the institution in which he is employed. By and large, however, the feeling has been that an individual knows the religious limitations which may be placed upon him when he accepts an academic appointment and in his acceptance thereby agrees to conform to these principles."

There's no doubt that limitations on Academic Freedom because of religious commitment are acceptable. A church body has a right to expect that its doctrinal position will be honored and upheld. In this connection we need to note the voluntary nature of such a commitment, and we need to be aware that it depends on trust and on the integrity of the individuals involved. Scripture binds all to whom it speaks, the Confessions are human documents to which we voluntarily subscribe. They do not bind us in the same sense that Scripture binds us; we bind ourselves to them. Here too a distinction needs to be made between the Lutheran Confessions and the Synodically-accepted doctrinal statements; the latter have never been viewed as being on the same level as the Lutheran Confessions. Yet because they have been accepted as Scriptural by the brethren they are to be honored and upheld. A church body must be able to trust those whom it calls to its colleges and seminaries. No statement of limitations can be drawn up that cannot be evaded by those intent on doing so.

Several other items might be noted briefly. The church's interest in what is being taught at its colleges and seminaries can best be protected by administrations and faculties. The recent remarks of President John R. Silber of Boston University are of interest here. President Silber's remarks were reported under the headline "Debasement of Academic Freedom Laid to Presidents' Permissiveness." It was President Silber's contention that Academic Freedom has degenerated in America because of the reluctance of faculties to discipline "liars and frauds" in their own ranks.

Also to be noted is the fact that there is another side to the coin. Academic Freedom must be accompanied by academic responsibility. Abbott calls attention to this in a recent issue of the *JOURNAL OF HIGHER EDUCATION* where he writes "Although maintenance of academic freedom is given the

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The Place of the Synodical Junior College In Recruitment for the Ministry

"But how are men to call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?" St. Paul posed that series of searching questions when writing to Roman Christians. They are vital questions for our own Synod to confront in a day of declining influence for the Christian faith. If we are convinced, as I am sure we are, that the answer to the first two questions of Paul is, "There is no way for them to do so," then the third question takes on special significance. Speaking as the president of one of the colleges of the Synod, I think it is one of the most vital questions facing the Synod at this point in our history.

Consider the following facts. In 1965, the total number of young men enrolled as freshman pastoral training students in our colleges was 465. Of these 265 graduated in 1973, a loss of 43%. In 1973, 199 college freshmen started with the pastoral ministry as their goal. Assuming the same loss ratio, only 114 would graduate in 1981, a number which does not even come close to meeting existing needs of established congregations to say nothing of the need for mission expansion. Before they can be sent to preach, the workers must be available. Every statistic which we have at this time points to a shortage situation in this area within a very short time. What shall be done to correct it as quickly as possible?

Faced with declining enrollment and increasing educational costs, the entire synodical system of education is in jeopardy. As a proposed solution, there is a strong movement to jettison the junior college system as so much excess baggage which is weighing down the educational ship. It is a course of action which the task force appointed by the New Orleans Convention will have to consider seriously. But before the decision to do so is made, careful consideration ought to be given to the unique role of the junior college in recruitment for the pastoral ministry.

There is first of all a matter of the general nature of the education which a junior college has to offer. While it is true that this is also available at a four-year institution, it is also true that at such a place there is a tendency for the individual instructor to specialize in a limited field. In a junior college, within our Synod, the instructor by necessity is more of a generalist. He may not have his doctoral degree but very often he holds several masters degrees in different areas and is able to integrate these areas much as a pastor must in his work in the ministry. An instructor may teach in the fields of geography and physical education, of education and English, of music and history, of English and Religion, of Religion and mathematics, etc. When this integration of several fields is coupled with a commitment to the Word of God, the student can readily see the total interrelation of all of life as it is centered in the judgment and grace of God.

The general nature of this education makes it possible to enroll the student who has not yet made his choice of future occupations. He can enroll without a commitment and very often during the course of his educational career at the junior college he finds himself attracted to that pastoral ministry which he sees as involving all the aspects of life and service. He has a model in his instructors.

In a junior college, the student has many more opportunities for leadership experience. While a four-year college has other advantages, students in the junior college find that the leadership roles change much more quickly, providing oppor-

tunities for involvement and development of talents which will be of great value in the pastoral ministry.

The existence and availability of junior colleges in many locations alerts potential enrollees to the possibility of choosing the pastoral ministry in a manner which might not occur with a limited number of four-year colleges. As faculty and students participate in congregational activities through preaching, choirs, drama, etc., parents and children become aware of the opportunity for ministry which is available. The districts in which the colleges are located are richer for the existence of these facilities and personnel.

Because of their number and variety, junior colleges provide a common experience for future pastors while at the same time contributing their own uniqueness. The variation in pastoral approaches as well as the common commitment to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions which has marked the pastoral ministry of our Synod owes much to the junior college system. To a large extent the unity which characterized our pastoral ministry in the past is due to this common yet varying kind of preparation.

Junior colleges provide a kind of person-to-person ministry which is typical of the role of the pastor. In a close knit group such as is found on the campus of a junior college, the meaning of suffering and rejoicing together as members of the body of Christ becomes obvious.

Does the junior college have a role in recruitment for the pastoral ministry? We have had an excellent system in the past and provided for our pastoral needs. Because of finances, we were forced to eliminate the high schools, one aspect of that system, and our needs are no longer being met. We eliminated them just at a time when the trend in education was to shorten the high school program by allowing upper level students to enroll in college courses, and our enrollment declined. It could be a tragedy for our future supply of pastors if we compounded the error by eliminating the junior colleges. They still are an excellent source of recruitment for the ministry.

Dr. Walter Rosin, President.
St. Paul's College
Concordia, Missouri

Affirm

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

All correspondence, editorial material, contributions, and communications about subscriptions should be addressed to:

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c/o Walther Memorial Lutheran Church
4040 West Fond du Lac Avenue
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Fundamentalism

One of the methods most frequently used to discredit the efforts of a group of individuals is to attach a label to them. There are many examples, some of which I know that I am guilty of, but one which is frequently used in the present controversy within our Synod is the expression "Fundamentalist" or "Fundamentalism." The secular press has been particularly adept at using these terms to describe anyone who accepts a literal interpretation of those portions of Scripture which deal with historical events. There are even those within our own circles who tend to use this label rather indiscriminately, for anyone who really understands the true meaning of the term should realize how unjustly it is being used.

Perhaps one of the best explanations of the origin of the word "Fundamentalism" is found in the book *The Religious Bodies of America*, written by F. E. Mayer (Concordia Publishing House, 3rd Edition). I would recommend that you read carefully pages 475 to 483, for it will explain how the movement got started, and what it stands for. I would like to quote rather extensively, from it, for Prof. Mayer was a much greater authority than I.

Fundamentalism came into being during the latter portion of the 1800's as an interdenominational effort to stem the tide of Modernism. This term, and what it stood for, is described by Prof. Mayer in a section entitled "Nature of Modernism" (page 479). He writes:

"Modernism is a method, not a creed. Modernists are united in their approach to the theological problem, but not in their conclusions. They assert that they are motivated by the attempt to modernize Christian thinking by reinterpreting the Church's rich dogmatical heritage in the light of modern man's insights, interests and needs. Accordingly they attempt to recapture the religious experience out of which the classic doctrines of the Church have developed and to restate them in terms of modern man's religious experience. Thus modern man will fill with new meaning such Biblical terms as revelation, grace, the kingdom of heaven, and such terms as Trinity, Inspiration, Atonement, deity of Christ, justification.

"To reach this goal, Modernism has adopted the empirical or scientific method. Modernism, then, insists that it never starts with an a priori truth nor ever reaches the final truth. The empirical method flatters man, for it elevates the individual to the position where he and he alone by his own religious experience determines his theological promises and findings. But this method, by its very nature, confounds man, leads him to uncertainty and finally to despair. It is in the very nature of the Modernistic method that men arrive at greatly varying and even contradictory conclusions."

Describing the method used by the Modernist, he states:

"The third prop of Modernism is the German school of Higher Criticism, which denied the divine inspiration and absolute inerrancy of the Bible. The basic principle of this school was that the Bible is a collection of human documents subject to the same literary criticism as other human writings. This fact, the advocates of Higher Criticism maintain, demands (1) the recapture of the particular situation in which each book of the Bible was written; (2) the fixation of the original purpose and distinctive message of each respective book; and (3) the determination of the relevance of the recorded experiences, particularly those of Jesus, for modern man. The unique position of the Bible was said to be due to its ability to guide men to religious experiences higher than those achieved by any other collection of sacred writings." (page 476-7)

During the early decades of this century, Modernist theologians gained control of many influential positions on

denominational boards and in theological seminaries, and were able to spread their views. The conservatives among the Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Christians then organized to combat this liberal theology, and in 1909 published a set of books entitled "The Fundamentals."

In describing the resulting movement, Prof. Mayer says:

"There is much in the movement which commends itself to conservative theologians of all denominations. The Fundamentalists are ardent supporters of the strict orthodox doctrines of Christianity, particularly those which are susceptible to rational attacks, such as the inerrancy and authority of Scripture, the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, miracles, the atonement, resurrection, and the glorious return of Christ. However, in their zeal to preserve and defend traditional Christianity against the inroads of rationalism, they went to such extremes that conservative theologians, especially the Lutherans and to some extent the Presbyterians do not wish to be known as Fundamentalists. They prefer the adjective 'conservative,' since they cannot approve the excessive views of Fundamentalism.

"In their reaction against the principles of Modernism that the Bible is subject to the same literary criticism as every human document, many conservatives in the Reformed bodies resorted to a theory of mechanical inspiration and extreme literalism, which brought discredit upon Fundamentalism. A relatively large number of Fundamentalists were of the opinion that a successful attack upon Modernism could be made only if the conservatives ignore the doctrinal differences and unite on a broad confessional basis. From its inception Modernism has been completely this-worldly. Prompted in part by its literalism but chiefly by its opposition to Modernism, the majority of Fundamentalists espoused premillennialism, some, dispensationalism." (Page 483)

So, you can see, there are similarities, yet at the same time vast differences, between the Fundamentalist and the Lutheran conservative. Both movements came into existence for the same reason, though the Lutheran movement came into being 60 years later. Both represent an effort on the part of concerned church members to retain the purity of the Gospel. Both were made necessary because the liberal theologian had gained control of the influential boards and seminaries of the respective church bodies.

Here, however, the similarity ceases. The Lutheran conservative accepts the whole truth as revealed in Scripture. He lets Scripture interpret Scripture, accepts the Bible as God's divinely inspired Word, the Lutheran Confessions in their entirety as a proper explanation of that Word.

The Fundamentalists, on the other hand, pick and choose. They tend to emphasize that portion of Scripture which best suits their purpose, and ignore the other sections which may speak in opposition. They have a limited list of "fundamentals." Mechanical inspiration, an extreme literalism which leads some sects to handle deadly snakes and drink poisonous liquids, pre-millennialism, these are marks of Fundamentalism which demonstrate their over-emphasis on one limited portion of Scripture. Even gospel reductionism could fall within this category.

To attach this kind of label to a Lutheran conservative either demonstrates a lack of understanding, or it is the greatest kind of injustice.

Richard Korthals
Arcadia, Michigan

Atlanta . . . (Continued from Page 4)

has not had the opportunity to meet the AATS standards for accreditation (see Commission on Accrediting Preliminary Report Part II);

and WHEREAS, the new probation imposed by the Commission on Accrediting applies to an institution which *de facto* has not been accredited, therefore be it

RESOLVED, the AATS through its Executive Committee, require the theological educational enterprise being conducted at 801 DeMun Avenue to follow the regular procedure for schools seeking accreditation from the AATS.

Presented by:

James Aull, Lutheran Southern Seminary
Wesley Fuerst, Lutheran School for Theology at Chicago
William Leshner, Pacific Lutheran Seminary
Fredrick Meuser, Lutheran Theological Seminary,
Columbus, Ohio
John D. Newpher, Lutheran Theological Seminary,
Philadelphia

Robert Roth, Northwestern Lutheran Seminary
Robert Schultz, Lutheran Southern Seminary
Paul Sponheim, Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul
Herman G. Streumpf, Lutheran Theological Seminary,
Gettysburg

William H. Weiblen, Wartburg Theological Seminary

Note the names and the institutions presenting this resolution. Lutherans, all of them. And again, note the purpose, the single, evil, cruel, utterly unfair purpose, of discrediting, hurting and destroying Concordia Seminary. Note the names and institutions well. Lutheran "friends," all of them, who profess their fellowship with Missouri. And note the long arm of Seminex and their able representative, Dr. Tietjen, who orchestrated this latest ignominious power play.

But again the power play failed! The "Lutheran" resolution was overwhelmingly defeated. The delegates were no doubt tired of being involved in such dirty internecine warfare carried out by Seminex and her anti-Missourian Lutheran friends. In Tietjen's final speech he made it plain how disappointed he was that Concordia—where he still claims to be president and from whom he receives his home and ample salary—still retains its full accreditation.

If the resolution proposed by the ten Lutheran professors had gone through, the AATS would have been through. The staff and the Commission on Accrediting would have been forced to resign. So spiteful, so intransigent is the Seminex spirit, now shared by many other Lutheran leaders outside our Synod, which would have caused this to happen—just to destroy Concordia Seminary.

This is not the last power play to be attempted by Seminex. The next one is already in process. By continuing to misrepresent and discredit Concordia Seminary in *Missouri in Perspective* and elsewhere; by soliciting sympathy for former students who wish to enter the ministerium of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod but refuse to do so constitutionally; by blaming the president of Synod for all kinds of things and insisting that he is somehow responsible for the wrongs they have committed; by keeping on disobeying the constitution and defying all authority in the Synod; by continuing her operation with the support of Jesuit and liberal seminaries and recruiting Missouri Synod students who should be at our synodical schools, Seminex is now preparing for the biggest power play of all. Keep up the fighting, the propaganda, the denunciation of all Boards and Commissions and officials who have gotten in their way; increase the division, the disinformation, the confusion, the attrition within Synod; support ELIM to elect delegates sympathetic to the liberal cause—and then, then go to Anaheim and take over. That will be the final power play by Seminex.

Freedom . . . (Continued from Page 5)

number one priority by members of the academic community (in a questionnaire sent to administrators, faculty members and members of boards of trustees) there is hardly a word in this report about academic responsibility. A non-academic observer might have thought this to be a proper counterpart."

Closely tied in with Academic Freedom is the matter of faculty and institutional autonomy. On this subject Clark Kerr writes "Society has become more concerned with higher education. Full autonomy . . . is dead, although independent action in 'reserved' areas is still possible and highly essential. The ivory tower of yore is now become a regulated public utility," Robert O. Berdahl says "The rugged individual who once took delight in driving over empty country lanes has ultimately to accept the necessity in the face of increasingly heavy traffic of having traffic signals and traffic rules and has found that his essential freedoms have not suffered thereby. The crucial word here, of course, is essential, since we all recognize that some freedoms are inevitably curtailed by the coming of system. In the case of higher education, the essential freedoms have never been properly sorted out from the marginal ones, so academics are more than normally nervous about the imposition of a state system."

The church certainly has a right to be interested in what is taught at its institutions of higher education: complete institutional autonomy is not only impossible but undesirable.

Dr. John W. Klotz, Academic Dean
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri

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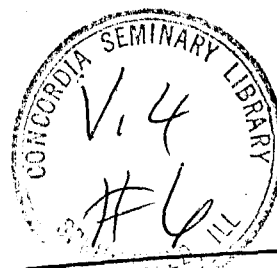
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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

ELIM At Chicago

By now many of you have read the story of the ELIM convention and one or the other of the assessments which have been made of the three-day gathering.

Fifteen hundred attended the Chicago meeting. According to reports ELIM claims the support of 2,000 of Missouri's clergy and 8,000 of its laymen. Total membership of Missouri now stands around the 3,000,000 mark.

Two significant facts emerge. Some have carefully analyzed the composition of ELIM's clergy membership and concluded that perhaps 1,000 of these men now serve parishes. The rest are scattered throughout the church in many other capacities.

It has also been pointed out that for years at the St. Louis Sem students were exposed to a liberal point of view and Missouri's tradition was downgraded.

Observers, moreover, who were at the sessions and personally talked with some of those in attendance, concluded that the spread of theological opinion in ELIM is wide. They reported that some Elimites individually took a liberal stance, some seemed in the middle, some seemed genuinely perplexed about Lutheran theology, and some, according to their statements, seemed really to belong in the conservative camp.

More surprisingly, only 8,000 laymen seem to participate in the ELIM movement. Reports of the meeting indicate that one of ELIM's great needs is to reach Missouri's laity and re-educate it to the more liberal thinking which forms a part of ELIM's core.

Among the most important facts to be noted are that the convention adopted a budget of \$1,600,000 for the next year.

These monies are intended to support what most Missourians would regard as the full scale activities of an independent church body. These are main outlines of where ELIM's monies apparently will go.

Nearly half of the budget is intended for Seminex, the sem in exile, even though Missouri does not recognize the ordination of its graduates.

Another part of the monies to be collected is to support ELIM's mission program—whatever form it may take within the course of the year.

Some monies apparently will be used on behalf of the official publication of ELIM, *Missouri in Perspective*.

The balance will be used to maintain the general staff of ELIM.

The point of making such a review of the ELIM fiscal projections is that it highlights the fact that ELIM proposes to continue to do what it has done in the past: maintain within Missouri a church structure parallel to that of Missouri's own.

Not all Elimites present wanted this.

Some outspokenly favored leaving Missouri and declaring the break at the time that the convention was taking place or, perhaps, as soon thereafter as possible.

Others believed that ELIM should continue the course it has outlined, in the hope that it will be able to further influence Missouri's theological thinking at Anaheim's convention next summer or in the Dallas gathering two years after that. Whatever the reasons for the decision, the majority favored working within Missouri.

The convention featured some colorful remarks. One speaker stated, "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is dead. Let the dead bury their dead . . . Its structures are hopelessly corrupt. Its leadership is morally bankrupt."

Another saw Missouri as "a source of embarrassment, suffering, disgrace and despair to its members, to fellow Lutherans, and indeed to the whole Christian world." He also saw Missouri as something of a church in which its members derive "not a form of confessing, which commends itself by its inherent truth, but a form of legalism and raw power."

Of course, this is not true.

The conservative position has always been that Missouri as a church body is a group of confessing Christians who are freely persuaded by grace that the common confession they make is the right and true one, that it is God's will that they make it together and work together for the common truths they hold.

ELIM does not hold that position.

If you carefully read the document, *We are Persuaded*, received by the ELIM assembly, you cannot but conclude that ELIM stands for a Missouri in which a kind of theological permissiveness is allowed to prevail.

That document says, among other things, "What must be opposed is any authority—whether of Scripture, of reason, or of religious experience—that would set itself up as the guarantor of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Compare that with our Lord's statement that though heaven and earth pass away, His Word won't and His Word offers us Him through the Holy Spirit, as our only Lord and Savior!

Whatever else the ELIM convention made clear, it did clarify the fact that Missouri now is in fact two church bodies operating under a supposedly all-embracing corporation.

(Continued on Page 8)

Is Divisiveness Always Bad?

Words are a gift of Him who spoke the first word, "Let there be light!" What God wants us to know He saw fit to put into words. He spoke to us through His Son, but we know of that redeeming love in Christ only via "the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Into those words He put the strength of His Spirit and they became "the power of God unto salvation." The Gospel is, indeed "good-spell."

With all their power, words are interesting too, with their multiplicity of meanings and the shadings of various contexts. "Murmur," for example, usually has the flavor of whining and carping. And so we sing, "Oh, for a faith that will not murmur nor complain." But in another context Longfellow, in the opening lines of *Evangeline*, speaks happily of "the murmuring pines and the hemlocks."

Take the word "faith." It has a good solid sound to us. "By grace are ye saved through faith," is a cardinal Scriptural and Lutheran phrase. Yet, Scripture also says there is such a thing as a dead faith, and that is not good.

All of which brings us to the word "divisive." It has come to have a bad connotation, especially in the present doctrinal controversy troubling our Synod. Words, statements, articles, and actions get the quick and critical label "divisive." Call for a clear theological distinction or ask for an unambiguous, unevasive, and straight forward statement on Genesis 1, Jonah, the inspiration of Scripture, or the miracles of Jesus' ministry, and someone is sure to say you are divisive. Speak against stretching our theological blanket thin enough so there is "room for all of us" and oppose the notion of diluting our dogma into a vagueness that challenges no one, and you are divisive.

Which is to say, you are ruffling feathers, muddying the waters, sinning against love, hindering reconciliation, and making waves.

But is divisiveness necessarily always bad? Webster doesn't think so. Ahead of the definition "creating or tending to create disunity or dissension," he gives the fine older meaning of the word, "Having the quality of separating or distinguishing."

Nor does Scripture think that all divisiveness is bad. In fact, it often calls for the very "separating and distinguishing" that Webster speaks of. It does so because there is somehow a perverse trait in human nature that constantly wants to put things together that do not belong together, that wants to reconcile the irreconcilable. For example, man's tendency is somehow to harmonize grace and works, but the entire Letter to the Galatians and a good part of Romans cry out against it.

The Apostle Paul reminded the parish at Corinth regarding the need for a divisiveness that distinguishes. "For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what accord has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols?"

Think of the divisiveness of Jesus! "He that is not with Me is against Me." It is that simple, and that divisive. Or, again, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Once more we ask, is all divisiveness bad? Luther didn't think so. On April 18, 1521 the lone Augustinian monk stood before the combined and awesome power of church and state. Summoned to the congress at Worms and called upon to recant before Emperor Charles V, Luther's appeal to the Word of God as binding his conscience is recognized as one of the great moments in history. The final sentences of his defense are well known and often quoted. The concluding words, "Here I stand. God help me!" are a Lutheran hallmark.

Not so well known are these words from that same "speech that shook the world:" "What I have just said I think will clearly show that I have well considered and weighed the dangers to which I am exposing myself; but far from being dismayed by them, I rejoice exceedingly to see the Gospel this day, as of old, a cause of disturbance and disagreement. It is the character and destiny of God's Word. 'Think not I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's foes shall be those of his own household.'"

Our Lord came to make peace between God and man. He bids us, insofar as possible to live peaceably with all men. There is a time and place for the sweet reasonableness of compromise. But there is also a time for a God-pleasing stubbornness which refuses to yield one jot or tittle of His Holy Word.

Let the Missouri Synod not shun such divisiveness nor fear the label. In matters where our Lord has clearly spoken, to be anything less would be to invite the wrath and rejection of Him who said, "He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully."

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
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Affirm

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

All correspondence, editorial material, contributions, and communications about subscriptions should be addressed to:

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While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

The Hermeneutical (Biblical Interpretation) Problem at the Heart of Missouri's Controversy

A situation which must be confusing to the laity of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is the fact that the two groups contending for the hearts and minds of the members of the over 6,000 congregations comprising the Synod both claim that they accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God and hold to the teachings of the Lutheran Confessions. And yet the two groups are espousing positions that are diametrically opposed to each other on a number of important matters. They hold opposing views on the inerrancy of the Bible, on the question of whether the Biblical canon is open or closed. Is it necessary to believe in angels, good or evil? Was the devil active in Old Testament times? Did Jesus perform all the miracles that are ascribed to Him? Did Jesus utter all the words the evangelists describe Him as uttering? Will Christ again return visibly as He left this earth visibly on the day of the Ascension? Does man have body and soul? What happens at death? One group contends that to get the most out of the Scriptures the Historical-Critical Method should be employed, while the other group asserts that the Historical-Grammatical Method is the only proper method with which to do justice to the Word of God.

The differences that currently sharply divide professors, pastors, and laymen is ultimately a matter of Biblical hermeneutics (Biblical interpretation). In his last letter to his coworker Timothy, the Apostle Paul wrote: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed of, and who properly presents the message of truth." (*Revised Standard Version*.) Williams, in his *The New Testament* rendered the same passage this way: "Do your best to present yourselves to God as one approved workman who has nothing to be ashamed of, who properly presents the messages of truth." Already St. Peter was complaining in his day that there were people who were misinterpreting the Epistles of St. Paul. Not only were they distorting teachings in Paul's letters but they were also doing it with the rest of the Scriptures to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16).

The Authorized or King James translation has rendered II Timothy 2:15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The word in the original rendered as "rightly dividing" is more accurately rendered "rightly handling" (orthotomeo). "Rightly handling" the Word of God would definitely involve the proper distinction between Law and Gospel. When these two forms of God's Word are not correctly presented, they are commingled or confused. Great basic errors in theological systems of the past and of our day are directly connected with the failure not properly distinguishing between Law and Gospel. The Reformation involved the discovery by Luther that Law and Gospel must be properly distinguished if souls are to be saved, comforted and kept on the narrow path by the grace of God. Dr. C. F. W. Walther, the great leader in the early history of our Synod, wrote a classical work on this subject, entitled, *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, recently condensed by Walter C. Pieper, and issued under the title, *God's No and God's Yes*, (Concordia, 1973).

When Paul wrote to Timothy the words of II Timothy 2:15, instructing him to handle the Word of God correctly, he was warning his coworker against the Gnostic heretics. The latter claimed to have a knowledge superior to Christianity and held that the teachings of Christianity were inferior. Toward the conclusion of I Timothy, Paul wrote to his coworker in Asia Minor: "O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, for by professing it some have missed the mark as regards the faith."

Gnosticism was an eclectic system of religious and philosophical truths, taken from Judaism, Christianity, dualistic Zoroastrianism, Greek philosophy and other sources. In some respects Gnosticism incorporated ideas which were in harmony with the best philosophy of that day. The Gnostics priding themselves on having a superior knowledge used this as bait to induce Christians to abandon their faith in favor of this syncretistic religious philosophy.

Pastor Timothy in Ephesus and Pastor Titus on the Island of Crete had to battle the aggressive attacks of these Gnostics who used the Scripture in an incorrect way. One school of Gnosticism denied both the resurrection of Christ and man's corporeal resurrection. The Gnostics also insisted that matter itself was sinful. The paragraph in which verse II Timothy 2:15 occurs clearly shows that Paul was warning Timothy against these false teachings and false teachers, who were improperly handling the Word of Truth.

Philosophy has always influenced the interpretation of the Bible. From the time of the Church Fathers till modern times, we find that Neo-Platonism, Aristotelianism, Thomism, Kantianism, Hegelianism, Existentialism and most recently Process Philosophy have influenced the systems of interpretation employed in the Church and have led to an incorrect handling of the Word of Truth. The truth of God's revelation was either watered down or changed radically by these various forms of philosophy.

Human philosophy operates with the presupposition that all things are to be explained in a rational manner, that religious truths must be defensible before the bar of human reason. The movement known as rationalism attacked the supernatural elements of the Bible. This involved the rejection of those passages where God was depicted as communicating to human beings truths and information that He wanted man to know. Events which could not be explained purely in terms of cause and effect were not to be accepted as true historical happenings. This meant the rejection or reinterpretation of the Old Testament and New Testament miracles. *Thus over one hundred and thirty different miracles are unacceptable to interpreters that consistently hold that modern man no longer believes in miraculous and supernatural occurrences.*

Many passages and chapters in the Old Testament and the New speak about future events that would happen. If divine revelation and inspiration are ruled out, then that which is said to be predictive is either reinterpreted or denied. This would also include the prophecies about the coming of the Messiah (with whom Christ identified Himself) and those announcing the nature and extent of the Messianic kingdom. This would violate the literal meaning of the text. Luther and Walther held that the literal sense has but one meaning. In Luther's day however others attributed a fourfold sense to the Biblical text, but this meant that an expositor of the Scriptures was not certain what the text meant, and Biblical texts could be given meanings not at all indicated in the text themselves.

Genesis, chapters 1-3, are generally interpreted by many Protestants and Lutherans in a non-literal manner. The creation of the universe, plants, herbs, marine animals, aerial animals and of Adam and Eve are said not to have occurred in the manner described in the opening chapters of Genesis. Why not?

(Continued on Page 6)

The Academic

A Reaction to the Faculty of the Board for Higher Education on Limitation of Academic Freedom

I was one of the minority in a 30 to 50 vote when the faculty adopted its response of protest against inclusion of the Board for Higher Education limitation of academic freedom statement in contracts. I voted "No" as vigorously as possible, certainly not against any of the worthy expressions which the response resolution contains, but primarily because of its major fallacy, namely, the notion that the limitation statement would limit us beyond our captivity to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, and secondly, because our loyalty to the synodical Constitution involves compliance with the bylaws and the synodical resolutions which implement the Constitution and according to which we function as a faculty of Synod.

The faculty protest resolution is directed against the will of Synod and its Board for Higher Education that we be committed to honoring and upholding synodically adopted doctrinal statements. The resolution desires freedom, for anyone who wishes to do so, to protest and thus to seek to obstruct all the following: what Synod at Cleveland in 1962 by the mercies of God implored us to do; what at Denver in 1969 and at Milwaukee in 1971 it urged us to do; what in 1971 it pointed out as the meaning of "honor and uphold," namely "not merely to examine and study (the synodically adopted statements), but to support, act, and teach in accordance with them until they have been shown to be contrary to God's Word"; what Article II of the Constitution makes binding upon all members of Synod, namely that which the Scriptures happen to assert and teach, which necessarily, and without any addition to the Scriptures alone as the source and norm of Synod's doctrine (Article II), includes whatever in a synodically adopted statement of doctrine is in fact "in accord with the Scriptures and the pattern of doctrine set forth in the Lutheran Symbols." The faculty resolution protests a limitation under which faculty members in Synod's colleges were always understood to function.

Now suddenly when the limitation which Synod has always meant and understood to apply to its faculties comes in the form of a Board for Higher Education policy statement regarding contracts, there is protest. This is something like being booked to play Grieg's *Piano Concerto*, but, on some theory of being under the freedom of music, protesting that one ought to be allowed to delete some of the score or to improvise, no matter what the audience has come to hear.

Many hundreds of manhours, not to mention the womanhours, were spent to protest the idea of being committed by means of the limitation statement to honor, uphold, and teach according to the written Word of God *insofar* as that Word happens to be embodied also in synodically adopted doctrinal statements. Strategy meetings, Welfare Committee meetings, faculty meetings, campaigning over lunch tables and in corridors, coordinating with protest letters and materials to be distributed to graduates and their families, journalistic labors to give River Forest a blessed martyr image as a college in agony and in exile on our forty acres: we are all in varying degrees aware of these things. Are we aware that they may work like an incendiary bomb toward the destruction of the college as a viable institution in the service of Synod's objectives? The faculty protest resolution happily disavows any kind of incendiary purpose. However, the protest resolution is not unrelated to a heated, volatile emotional mood.

In the Second World War as an air raid warden in London, I was in charge of a squad of fire fighters, who knew what to do to put out a fire-bomb before it would burn down the building.

Mainly they had to learn to lug buckets of sand and buckets of water: sand to extinguish the fire-bomb and water to put out the blaze that the fire-bomb had started.

Let my buckets of sand and of water here be the fact that the limitation statement is but a compilation from the synodical Handbook and the synodical resolutions. It is these which immediately govern us. We deceive ourselves if we suppose that we exist and function as a faculty merely under Article II of the Constitution or under what is reductively and vaguely termed the freedom of the Gospel. We exist and function also under Article III and share in the training of ministers and teachers who together with us are to serve the objects of Synod, including Object No. 1, which is "The conservation and promotion of the true faith" and "a united defense against schism and sectarianism," that is, a united defense against the individualism and subjectivity in doctrine which is the seed-bed of disunity and division.

Moreover, we would not and could not function as a synodical faculty without the implementation of these articles of the Constitution by means of the by-laws, regulations, and resolutions of Synod. We exist and function in immediate dependence on past synodical convention decisions, which in turn are dependent on the synodical by-laws, and both of which derive from and implement the Constitution.

Does this seem a heavy yoke to be the servants of Synod and to have our activities governed by its by-laws, resolutions, and boards? Then let us remember the Lord's Word that in His kingdom greatness is a matter of becoming the servant of all. Some years ago a then spokesman of the Theology Department repeatedly assured a synodical president that they were mindful of the Fourth Commandment and would do as he would direct, would put on the brakes if he said so, would obey him, and the like. A spirit of willing, obedient servanthood must be ours in regard to the will of the Synod as that will now happens to be spelled out to us in the Board for Higher Education limitation statement.

This statement, as I have already indicated, consists of practically verbatim quotations from the Handbook and resolutions of Synod. Consider the limitation statement sentence by sentence and observe the sources.

Sentence 1

"Faculty members are pledged to the Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God and to the Lutheran Confessions." Why, of course. This is Bylaw 4.21.

Sentence 2

"They are expected to honor, to uphold, and to teach in accordance with the synodically adopted doctrinal statements which express the convictions of fathers and brethren with whom all members of Synod are united in their obedience to the Scriptures and the Confessions." First, the main clause. The 1962 Cleveland convention (Res. 3-17) besought us by the mercies of God to honor and uphold those doctrinal statements. The 1965 Detroit convention did likewise (Res. 2-08). The 1971 Milwaukee convention (Res. 2-21) reminded us what this means, namely "to support, act, and teach in accordance with them until they have been shown to be contrary to God's Word." Now the relative clause. It is from the 1962 Cleveland convention (Res. 3-17), which declares that synodically adopted doctrinal statements, such as four that it had mentioned, "express the conviction of fathers and brethren . . ." etc.

Freedom Issue

Protest Against Inclusion Education 'Policy Statement ic Freedom' in Contracts

Sentence 3

"Faculty members are encouraged to study the synodically adopted doctrinal statements as well as the Scriptures and the Confessions." This is good encouragement from the Board for Higher Education. For Synod holds those doctrinal statements "to be in harmony with the Word of God and requires that such resolutions be considered normative for every member" (Milwaukee, 1971, Res. 2-21). In that connection Synod reminds us that "a doctrine of Scripture remains a doctrine of Scripture despite the fact that it is formulated in synodically adopted resolutions."

Sentence 4

"Should they judge the synodically adopted doctrinal statements to be out of harmony with the Scriptures and the Confessions, they are to test their findings and opinions with their peer group, namely, the faculty and the Board of Control of the institution of which they are a part, and then to present them to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations before bringing them to the Synod itself." This is simply a rewording of Bylaw 1.09e, except that the Board for Higher Education helpfully specifies what would be a professor's peer group. The limitation statement's wording derives perhaps even more from parts of a 1965 Detroit convention resolution (2-01).

Sentence 6

"Meanwhile they are to refrain in brotherly love from disseminating such dissident findings as doctrinal opinions in the classroom and/or among the students, as well as in other situations and places as will cause confusion and offense in the church." This too is from the 1965 Detroit convention's resolution. There Synod calls upon professors "to refrain in brotherly love from disseminating doctrinal opinions in such situations as will cause confusion and offense in the church." The Board for Higher Education narrows the category of dissident findings not to be disseminated in the classroom and/or among the students to such dissident findings as doctrinal opinions. Situations involving students in classrooms and elsewhere are the natural habitat of professors and therefore the most likely breeding ground of confusion and offense in the church through the dissemination of dissident doctrinal opinion. The limitation statement therefore does well to specify what in the 1965 Detroit resolution is more general, namely the kinds of situations in which our careless words could damage the church grievously.

The paragraph of examples at the end of the limitation statement needs no comment.

Now, this little source analysis shows that the limitation statement is merely a compilation from the synodical bylaws and resolutions by which we as Synod's servants are governed. Like the Centurian of Capernaum, I am a man under authority. But as some of you know, I sometimes forget that I am like the Centurian of Capernaum in this regard. My Old Adam plants incendiary bombs to inflame me to negative reaction against directives. In the present instance this bucket of source analysis here lugged to the scene helps to foil my Old Adam's incendiary aim, but Christ, the New Adam, by His forgiveness of my sin

strikes living sparks of zeal from my flinty heart to obey gladly the Fourth Commandment as He obeyed His Father gladly.

But to get back again to the faculty resolution of protest. It makes repeated reference to Synod's Constitution. The bylaws, however, which set up the structures, boards, and the policies necessary in order to implement the objects of Synod given in the Constitution, these the faculty protest totally ignores. It ignores also the synodical resolutions where the rubber hits the road regarding our commission to teach as Scripture teaches and to carry out Synod's No. 1 object, promotion of the unity of the faith and united defense against the individualism in doctrine which breeds disunity. But if by protests and other means I seek to obstruct actual implementation of these bylaws and resolutions designed for bona fide realization of the Constitution's aims, am I not seeking to obstruct the Constitution itself. Ought I not reconsider my protest and change it to a support of the Constitution, its Bylaws, and the synodical resolutions as all of these find expression in the limitation statement?

But some think that the limitation statement would bind them to something beyond what the Holy Scriptures teach. This is not so. The written Word of God is the *only* rule and norm of faith and of practice. Synod from time to time adopted doctrinal statements essentially for the very purpose of honoring and upholding, supporting and maintaining, the "only" Sola Scriptura, in its Constitution Article II. *Only* the written Word of God establishes doctrine. Only that Word is the norm that decides which teachings are to be received and which rejected. Normative and decisive for us who subscribe to Article II are not human persons, not favorite personality types, not the latest theological trends, not the currents of thought in academia, but *only* the written Word of God, written for the likes of those common people of whom we are told that they heard the word of the Lord Jesus gladly. Conversely, no teaching that *has* been derived from and *is* in accord with the written Word of God dare be ignored or set aside on such grounds as the alleged cultural, academic, or other inadequacies of those who point it out to us. When tempted to make the character of the person, or the group, or the convention, or whatever, the standard for judging the validity of a doctrinal teaching or statement, we should remember that we are committed to the "only" the Sola Scriptura, of Article II. The only rule and norm is Scripture. Is the

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Academic Freedom . . .

(Continued from Page 5)

statement of doctrine Scriptural? That is the question, not who wrote it, or who and how many did or did not acknowledge it. If it asserts and insofar as it asserts what the written Word of God asserts, my subscription to the "only" of Article II binds me to it.

Think of the written Word of God as the galaxy in which Christian faith and practice live, move, and have their being. It is a galaxy full of light from the Holy Spirit of Him who is the Light of the World. The Scripture's many lights, planets, stars, truths, doctrines of various magnitude, are all of them His. Those of greatest magnitude, and also some others of lesser magnitude, were specifically charted and described with precision in the Confessions. But the Reformation era did not chart and catalogue them all. Yet by virtue of the "only" in Article II we are bound to be guided by them all and accept the light they shed upon the questions and complexities of our time. Insofar as the synodically adopted doctrinal statements recognize and chart them correctly from the Scriptures, these statements do not go beyond, do not add anything to the Scriptural base on which Synod stands in Article II of its Constitution. Let me repeat, insofar as the identification and the charting of Christian doctrine by the synodical statements are Scriptural and according to the confessional pattern, they certainly do belong to the galaxy of truths within which we are to live, and move, and have our being according to Article II.

Synod had kept repeating over many years that she expects her pilots and her trainers of pilots to honor, uphold, and follow the Biblical teachings, and these she has had the conviction and character to affirm. At the same time she has obligated her pilots to report to her if they think that at some point Synod's affirmations are not in fact accurately Scriptural. But she wants these reports to be made through the proper channels to the synodical control towers, not over the intercom loudspeakers to throw the passengers into a panic of confusion and disorder. Synod has the integrity of character to want her teachers to honor, uphold, and abide not just formally but in fact by what the written Word of God asserts and teaches. This is her one reason for adopting doctrinal statements. But at the same time Synod respects the conscience of the dissenter, and so what does she do? She wisely arranges for an orderly process of dissent and desires her teachers to commit themselves to using that process if they seriously believe that at some point Synod has taken a position contradicting the written Word of God, the Scriptures.

But suppose that I do find Synod's doctrinal position to be Scriptural, and suppose that I see clearly that a synodical faculty member is to stand for that Scriptural position, and suppose that I therefore accept the intent and substance of the limitation statement. And what if, nevertheless, I feel hurt by what I subjectively presume to be a cold or harsh tone in the policy statement which the Board for Higher Education has issued under its constitutional authority and pursuant of the constitutional objects of Synod? Well, here I can only remind myself of what I read a few days ago in the Lord's Sermon on the Mount in the new *International Version*: "If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles." That is a word of God. It overrules my hurt, real or imagined. So, the spirit guiding me by this star of light in the Sermon on the Mount, I go the first mile without resistance, and, the Lord still helping me—and I surely need a lot of help from Him—I go voluntarily the second mile as well. What constrains, draws, and motivates me to go these miles should always be and remain that powerful magnet, the mercies of God in the Gospel of Christ.

Dr. F. S. Janzow
Concordia Teachers College
River Forest, Illinois

Heart of Problem . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

Because of a philosophy of science that has interpreted the origin of the universe, life, plants, all different types of animals and finally man according to an evolutionary plan, based upon assumptions and unproven facts. Not facts, but speculative theories which have commanded great scholarly prestige, are used as the criterion for the abandonment of the literal meaning of Genesis, chapters 1, 2, and 3. The adoption of a false type of philosophy is the cause for not accepting the clear assertions of the Word of God. Those interpreters who insist that they cannot be in conflict with the scholarly opinion of savants who are motivated by rationalistic presupposition are consequently mis-handling the Word of Truth.

The Word of truth is not being handled properly, incorrectly, by those who use the principle of modern relevancy to either reject or explain away clear teachings of the Bible. Thus in the Bible homosexuality is unequivocally denounced as sinful, those insisting on continuing in its practice are said to be unable to inherit the kingdom of God. Yet in our day people in our Synod are defending this type of sexuality despite the Bible's clear teaching on this subject. There are pastors and people in our Synod who are condoning abortion, even though the Bible teaches clearly and unequivocally: "Thou shalt not kill."

Only when there will be agreement in our Synod on the basic rules of interpretation and when they are correctly used, will the unity which was once found to characterize our church body be restored again.

Dr. Raymond F. Surburg
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

The May 20, 1974 issue of *Affirm* erroneously identified the President of the Synod with a "speakers bureau" which would assist interested parties in securing appropriate persons for rallies. Such a bureau does not exist and we hope that this reference has not been misleading. Members, congregations, and conferences are and always have been encouraged, however, to call upon synodical personnel as speakers for meetings at which certain matters of interest and information are to be presented.

In the lead article of its June 20, 1974 issue *Affirm* called attention to the action the synodical Board of Directors took at their May 30-31 meeting with reference to the organizations, Balance, Inc., and ELIM. The last two paragraphs of the *Affirm* article offered editorial comment on these board actions.

It should be pointed out that the synodical board's resolution regarding *Affirm* "was not intended in any way to approve Balance, Inc., or to accredit all its activities" as the board pointed out in its July 25-26 meeting, in clarification of its May resolution. *Affirm* regrets that the contrary impression was unintentionally given in its June 20 article, second last paragraph.

Affirm's Mailing List

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An Open Letter to a Seminex Student

During the past summer a Seminex student served as a counselor at our camp. He had been with us the previous year, and I was aware of his capabilities, his dedication, and ability to work with the youth. He was a tremendous help to us again this year, and I was grateful for his presence. As we parted I expressed my gratitude, and he thanked me for allowing him to come. He also expressed appreciation for the opportunity to reach across the fence that separated us, and to touch hands as Christians. As he left I thought about what he had said, particularly his amazement at my acceptance of him as a person. I also began to realize that he did not really understand the fence that separated us, nor my position in regard to it. This letter, written to a real person, but a fictitious name, is an attempt to clarify. (This article was written while the author was Director at Camp Arcadia, Arcadia, Michigan—Ed.)

Dear Bob:

Several months have elapsed since we parted, and I am still contemplating your final words concerning the 'fence' and my acceptance of you. In my thinking I have begun to realize that I owe you the explanation for which we did not have time on that Saturday morning.

My acceptance of you has nothing to do with your position in regard to the 'fence.' I still regard you as a Christian, and I love and respect you accordingly. As such I was delighted to have you serve as a counselor for one week, because I know that our youngsters would benefit from exposure to your faith in Christ as your Savior.

But that does not mean that I would want to call you as a pastor of my church, where you would be placed in the position of teaching what you hold to be true to others. I would oppose that, not because of who you are, but because of what you have chosen to stand for—and the view of Scripture that your comrades espouse. It is here that the 'fence' enters into the picture.

The 'fence' which you spoke of is not one of my making, nor is it of recent construction. God had already erected that barrier between His people and the world in the Old Testament. That was why he sent Abraham on his long journey, and later gave His children a special land. Christ also spoke of the need for separation, and St. Paul in his letters to Timothy echoed the warning concerning false teachings.

But it was Luther who pointed out the fence and defined it for us as it applies today. It occurred in 1529 during the controversy with Zwingli and his followers concerning the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. I quote from Dr. C. F. W. Walther's "Law and Gospel," pages 165-6: "For the sake of peace the Swiss, indeed, offered to speak like Luther concerning the substantial presence of the true body and true blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, only they would understand by that a *spiritual* presence. Spite of this the Swiss desired with great earnestness—Zwingli even with tears in his eyes—that brotherly and ecclesiastical fellowship be not refused them on account of this single difference."

What did Luther do on this occasion? . . . Luther said to Zwingli: "Yours is a different spirit from ours."

What did Luther mean by the words, "Yours is a different spirit from ours?" This is important, because it helps to define the fence that was in existence then, and still is there today. What spirit did Luther find lacking in the Swiss? Again I quote from Walther: "It is the spirit of childlike simplicity which takes the Father in heaven by His words. The spirit of Zwinglian, Calvinistic, and unionistic churches is nothing else than the rationalistic spirit, the spirit of doubt and uncertainty which, like the unenlightened, unregenerate Nicodemus, queries before every mystery of Holy Scripture: 'How can these things be?' John 3:9."

That is the fence that Luther defined for us, and which for centuries distinguished Lutherans from other Protestants in their approach to the interpretation of Holy Scripture. We as a church body were all on one side, in agreement on the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture. We had peace and accord because we were all of one spirit, letting Scripture interpret Scripture when there was disagreement. There was warm fellowship between pastors and teachers because they were truly one.

But the day came when some theologians decided to climb the fence and be on the other side where the grass appeared greener and they perhaps could win more personal acclaim. They wanted to interpret Scripture in their own way, just as Zwingli and his followers did. It happened first in other Lutheran bodies, but our Synod was not immune. Initially it was only a few but soon the number increased as they lured fellow professors and students over the barrier. When our church body discovered what was taking place and protested, it was the fence climbers who cried that the church was being divided. Yet it was they who put the barrier between us by their action, not ours.

Bob, apparently you have decided to climb over to the other side. I pray that you will reconsider, because I cannot and will not join you. I am here because it is a matter of conscience. You say that your conscience will not allow you to change because of what has happened administratively. My conscience will not allow me to change because of what is happening to God's Word, and what will happen to the Gospel as a result of this.

I have observed the church bodies which are on the side you have chosen to be on. Most Protestant churches are over there. I have made many evangelism calls on members of these churches. The most common complaint they voiced was having to listen to sermons about everything except what God had said. Most were taught that good works were the key that opened the door to heaven.

Do you really feel as they do? Do you not see that a spirit of rationalism which causes men to question the validity of miracles just because we do not understand them will ultimately lead these same men to question the greatest miracle of all, our justification through faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior? True, it has not happened to any great extent as yet within our church body, and for that we thank God. But that is only because we have a generation of pastors who were trained to respect God's Word as truth. However, what will happen to the next generation, and the next—and the next?? Look about you and see how many churches on your side teach universalism, the idea that you will be saved if you are sincere in whatever you believe.

My conscience will not permit me to bequeath that kind of a church body to my children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. I am convinced that my confirmation vow and the verse spoken so many years ago, namely Acts 4:12, is still valid today.

I have been on the Commission on Theology and Church

(Continued on Page 8)

Letter . . .

(Continued from Page 7)

Relations for almost ten years. In that time I have listened to hundreds of arguments and explanations from the other side of the fence. I am still waiting for someone to show me a clear passage from Scripture which would indicate that miracles did not really occur. I am still waiting for one example where Christ or one of the Biblical writers indicated that the Bible was of human origin and therefore full of errors. I am still waiting for one clear quotation from the Confessions which would demonstrate that Luther and his followers failed to accept God's Word as truth.

That is why my conscience, guided by what I read in Holy Scripture, tells me that I am on the right side of the fence. This goes beyond personalities and administrations. The stakes are eternal. Won't you perhaps reconsider your decision, and join the millions, the majority of us, who feel as I do? Then the touch which we experienced across the fence could be transformed into that warm embrace between two individuals who are of the same spirit.

In Christian Love,

Richard Korthals
Concordia Teachers College
River Forest, Illinois

ELIM . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

The one is the old Missouri which simply wants to carry out the work it has traditionally done under the doctrines it has accepted through the years as stated in the Word.

Side by side with these members is another organized group, ELIM, with different goals theologically, and with its own structure: fully financed, including the education of its own brand of clergy, the carrying out of its own kind of mission work, the propagandizing of the church through its own independent publication.

Some of its members brand Missouri as dead. Some still think Missouri has life and can be switched to their way of thought.

It seems impossible that such a contradictory situation can long continue in Missouri.

We can pray God that her conservative leaders will soon take the initiative in ending with proper steps the strange contradictions into which our church body has fallen.

WALTHER MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4040 W. Fond du Lac Ave.

Milwaukee, Wis. 53216

I Solemnly Swear

Christian oaths have never been taken to be a light matter. This is especially true of those offices established by God, for His service. It should be noted that such oaths are applied to the clergy of our church. A special oath of office is administered to the president and vice-presidents of Synod, as well as their counterparts in each district of Synod.

That oath says in part, "Our beloved Synod, the LCMS, an organization of Christian congregations, banded together in Christian liberty for the conservation and continuance of the unity of the true faith, for the resistance to error, schism, and sectarianism in every form, for united effort in extending the Kingdom of God here on earth . . . Your acceptance of these offices obligates you to serve Synod, not only in the duties laid down in its constitution as pertaining to your respective offices, but also to promote and preserve among its congregations the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, to maintain to the best of your ability its truly Christian and Lutheran character, and to do your utmost so that it will continue uncompromisingly to adhere to God's Word and in no point swerve from the Scriptural position clearly stated and defined in the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church." (*The Lutheran Agenda*, pp. 195-196)

In the willing assumption of this oath, the officer of Synod promises to God and His people, that he will carry this out both according to the doctrines of Scripture, their definition in the Lutheran Confessions and the Constitution and By-Laws of the LCMS.

As to the seriousness of God in such matters, hear Him, "If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth." (Numbers 30:2.) Deuteronomy 23:21 and Ecclesiastes 5:4 affirm the same precept. Pray the Lord, that this precept may once again become a hallmark among us.

The performances and utterances of some synodical and district officers, who find themselves at odds with the stated position of Synod causes people to doubt the seriousness with which oaths of office are taken.

The Rev. Harlan Harnapp, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
North Platte, Nebraska

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Volume IV, No. 7
October 14, 1974

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13



The Historical-Critical Method: What Is It?

THE Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is plagued by many problems today. Among the issues over which there has been considerable discussion and debate is the "Historical-Critical Method." The phrase has been used by President J. A. O. Preus in his Report of 1972 and has appeared in memorials presented to Districts and Synod, resolutions, and in official documents prepared by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations. The "Historical-Critical Method" has been known also as "scientific exegesis," "Biblical criticism," "higher criticism," and "historical criticism." In the Missouri Synod today, some clergymen make the claim that the "Historical-Critical Method" can be used with "Lutheran presuppositions." In spite of the fact that there has been a lot of talking about the "Historical-Critical Method," there seems to be confusion about its meaning not only among the laity of the Missouri Synod, but even among those who professionally use the phrase. Hopefully the following questions and answers will shed some light on the issue.

1) Can the "Historical-Critical Method" be simply and clearly defined? Though the phrase is bandied about by many important people in the church, the phrase the "Historical-Critical Method" is not capable of a simple and clear definition.

2) Does this mean that the phrase the "Historical-Critical Method" is a mere phrase or merely words with absolutely no meaning behind it? Many people who have publicly supported the "Historical-Critical Method" do not really know what is involved. For some the phrase is used as a slogan to make them appear intellectually acceptable in the academic community of the church. One defined it as praying and then translating the original language. For those who are engaged in a more full time study of the Bible, the "Historical-Critical Method" simply means how each man individually studies the Bible and the results he obtains.

3) Is then the "Historical-Critical Method" a very subjective and personalistic thing? Quite bluntly, the answer to this question is "Yes!" It is a roof under which a wide range of diverse and frequently contradictory opinions live.

4) Don't we have an obligation to study the position of every theologian who troubles us? The Missouri Synod expects its professors at its seminaries and members of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations to be concerned about the influential theologians of our time. Paul and Luther in their day were so concerned and we must be too. But the mere fact that we must continually study and carefully examine the positions of many New Testament scholars proves that there is no such thing as the "Historical-Critical Method." It is, as I previously explained, a convenient handle to describe what each scholar of the Bible, using a variety of certain methods, does.

5) Is there any book or pamphlet which can tell me how to use the "Historical-Critical Method"? Strange as it might seem there is not such book in existence and no such book will ever come into existence. There are books written by famous scholars in America and Europe on how each man studies the Bible, but it would be a pure illusion to believe that these scholars agree in any one method. Bultmann, who justly deserved the title of the major historical critic of the New Testament in our time, has been repudiated by the very men who studied under him and who have become famous in their own right. We can also be assured that these men in turn will be corrected and repudiated in turn by their own students. The best that most can do is to learn what one man does in studying the Bible. Even if he does this carefully, he must know ahead of time that what he has learned can soon become antiquated.

6) All this is very confusing. Can you give me an example of how Bultmann was different from the men before him and how men after him have changed their positions from his? You bet this is confusing, but confusion is good camouflage. Still your question should be answered. In the 19th century, most European scholars of the Bible took a dim view of miracles. It was presupposed that mankind had advanced so far "scientifically" that it would no longer accept what the Bible reported as miraculous. Jesus was considered only as a human being and not the divine Son of God. Each scholar saw Jesus exactly as he wanted to. The end result of the efforts of one century is that many said that our knowledge of Jesus was whittled down next to nothing. Bultmann came along and tried to answer the question of where the words in our New Testament came from. This is called "form criticism," identifying the origin of the words in the Bible. Bultmann concentrated on the words that the Bible said that Jesus spoke.

Two Articles on 'New' Approach

Both laymen and clergy will find the two articles, dealing with the Historical-Critical Method, a simple and accurate analyses of the subject which is at the heart of Missouri's traumatic struggle. Using different approaches, both Dr. Scaer and Dr. Surburg help the reader understand what Missourians always in the past agreed to and what the "new" approach amounts to.

(Continued on Page 4)

The Negation of Fundamental Principles of Lutheran Biblical Interpretation By the Historical-Critical Method

THE Lutheran Church from its very beginning in the 16th century has followed a number of basic rules of interpretation; rules that were the product of the interpretative efforts of Luther and other reformers. The Lutheran and Protestant Reformations would have been impossible without a change in the rules of interpretation followed by the Roman Catholic Church since the days of Origen and Augustine. For a period of over a thousand years the allegorical method had been the ruling principle of interpretation. It was accepted practice that any text of the Scriptures could be interpreted in four different ways. It was thus St. Augustine's contention that the text of the Scripture had more than one meaning and therefore the use of allegory was proper. For example, if the literal meaning made for dissension, the allegorical method was to be employed. The supreme test of whether or not a text was to be interpreted allegorically was that of love. By means of allegory the Church Fathers were also able to harmonize the teachings of pagan philosophy with Biblical teaching. In this practice they had a forerunner in Philo of Alexandria.

With the Lutheran Reformation there was established as a basic rule of interpretation that *every word, phrase, or sentence has only one definite meaning in a given context or given connection*. While this principle is true, it is important to note that a word occurring in different passages may have a literal meaning in one passage and in another passage a figurative. When Jesus said that the foxes have holes, he was speaking of animals, but when Jesus spoke of that fox Herod He was saying that Herod was like a fox and so used the word figuratively. However, in both sentences the intended meaning is one and not multiple. *The literal or intended sense must always be accepted as the literal sense, unless there is absolute necessity for understanding it figuratively.*

THIS is a very important principle for which there is the utmost practical use, not only in the Bible, but universally in human communication. Otherwise it would be impossible to be sure of anything enunciated in the Bible. The Lutheran fathers adopted a basic rule of Biblical interpretation: "*sensus literalis unus est*," i.e. the literal sense is one.

Each passage has only one Spirit-intended meaning. Lieber, in his *Legal and Political Hermeneutics*, 3d ed., p. 74 asserted many years ago: "No sentence or form of words can have more than one true sense, and this is the only one we have to inquire for. This is the very basis of all interpretation. Interpretation without it has no meaning. Every man or body of persons making use of words does so in order to convey a certain meaning, and to find this precise meaning is the object of all interpretation. To have two meanings in view is the equivalent of having no meaning. The interpretation of two meanings implies absurdity" (p. 74f). *Luther warns against the practice of finding more than one sense in a given Scriptural passage.* Thus the Reformer wrote: "The Holy Spirit is the most simple Writer—in heaven and earth; accordingly His words cannot, have more than a single meaning" (St. Louis, ed., IV; V:1169). Again: "We should not say that Scripture, or God's Word, has more than one sense," (St. Louis, ed. XVIII: 1307).

Dr. W. F. Walther, in his treatise *The Lutheran Church—the True Visible Church* under Thesis XVI, C. asserted: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church acknowledges only the literal sense as the true sense." Under XVI, D. he declared: "The Ev. holds the literal sense has but one sense."

To help in the understanding of the true literal meaning of the

Scriptures Luther, the Lutheran Confessions also hold to *the principle that Scripture interprets Scripture*. In Thesis XVI Walther stated the axiom: "The Ev. Lutheran Church accepts God's Word as it interprets itself."

MODERN practitioners of the Historical-Critical Method do not accept these two basic hermeneutical principles. which were followed not only by Lutherans but also by other Protestants since the Reformation era. These are elementary principles that were again emphasized in the days of the Reformation. For example in the Book of Leviticus the statement is made at least 37 times that the Lord (Yahweh) spoke to Moses and said . . . *The entire contents of Leviticus is said to have been communicated to Moses, and yet critical scholars have rejected these clear assertions of the text and claim that the material in Leviticus comes from the days of Babylonian captivity, where a priestly class attributed the first sixteen chapters to Moses, but God never spoke them nor gave them to Moses. Chapters 17-27 are said to come from the time of Ezekiel (592-571 B.C.) in Babylonia, and the contents of the Holiness Code, as these chapters are called by critical scholars, did not have their origin with Moses nor did God give the directives in these chapters to Moses.*

The contents of Deuteronomy, with the possible exception of chapter 34, are depicted in the book as having been written by Moses. Furthermore, they are portrayed for the most part (chapters 1-30) as comprising the farewell addresses of Moses to the people whom he had brought as God's leader from Goshen in Egypt, through the wilderness to the land of Moab, opposite Jericho. The materials in Deuteronomy are for the most part a restatement of laws God had given the Israelites at Mt. Sinai and in the wilderness. Deuteronomy contains much material found in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. Yet *employers of the Historical-Critical Method claim the book was not composed by Moses, who is described as recording all he had spoken in a book, and claim that the material was composed by a group of people, called by critical scholars "The Deuteronomists," and that the book was composed in the seventh century B.C. to promote the reformation of King Josiah.* Yet there is no suggestion or hint that the Josianic Reformation was the occasion for the composition of the fifth book of the Pentateuch, a work which many centuries after Moses' death was divided into five books.

BY employing the principle that Scripture interprets Scripture we see that *Jesus refers to both Leviticus and Deuteronomy and ascribes these books to Moses.* Jesus quoted from Leviticus 20:9 and Deuteronomy 5:16 as written by Moses. Our Lord refers to Deuteronomy 24:1-3 as written by Moses. John says of the Pentateuch (the five books of Moses) that the Law was given by Moses (John 1:17).

In the New Testament the two Letters of Timothy and the Letter to Titus are described in the opening verse of each of these epistles as having been authored by Paul. The employers of the Historical-Critical Method deny the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles (I and II Timothy and Titus). Other critical scholars have questioned the authorship of the letters known as I and II Peter. Both letters clearly state that Peter, one of the leading apostles, was the writer of both of these general epistles. Although the text is explicit, yet the Petrine

(Continued on Page 6)

On the News Front

DR. Robert D. Preus was inaugurated on September 15th at the thirteenth president of Missouri's Springfield seminary. The other members of the Editorial Group join in congratulating him and wish him God's richest blessing in his new work! Certainly he brings to it the skills and dedication to Missouri's theology which will serve the church well.

IN the continuing effort to heal the breach which has occurred in Missouri the St. Louis Sem's Board of Control confirmed its desire to meet with the representatives of Seminex and others in an open discussion of the issues Missouri struggles with. The first meeting took place October 2, as this issue of *Affirm* goes to press.

WITH the current enrollment at the St. Louis campus standing at 193, this seminary, together with the Springfield seminary, has a total enrollment of 580. It is good to know that these two schools, dedicated to training a conservative ministry, have so high an enrollment.

THE Council of Presidents passed the following resolution at its September meeting:

"We the Council of Presidents *reaffirm our determination of May, 1974, that 'for this year only all Seminex graduates be placed,' and to that end we recommend the following procedure:*

"All unendorsed Seminex graduates be counseled to seek endorsement through a review committee, approved by the Concordia Seminary faculty, comprised of the president of the District in which the graduate is serving or, if he is not serving in a District, the president of his home District, together with a designated Concordia Seminary representative and a parish pastor chosen by the graduate." (Italics added)

Dr. J. A. O. Preus, Missouri's president told the Council of District Presidents:

"However well-intended the authorization of uncertified men is, whatever appeals are made to a 'higher law of love,' the fact remains that this action of eight District presidents has brought The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to a very grave hour in her history. Not only has the corporate integrity of the Council of Presidents been virtually destroyed so that any future resolutions of that body will have little credibility, but the very life of our church body is threatened by the deliberate violation of constitutional authority.

"*The ordination of these young men who have refused to be interviewed by Concordia Seminary is null and void in our Synod, and the District presidents who have authorized these ordinations have violated their office.*

"In spite of this divisive action on the part of some District presidents, *I still pray for healing in the church and, therefore, plan to meet with each of these men in the hope that through such ministry they may be led to see the seriousness of their actions and to do whatever they can to encourage the young men involved to receive the proper certification of the church.*

"If such efforts prove fruitless, *I would expect these District presidents in conscience to resign their office.* Under the circumstance, this would be proper indeed, as Dr. Harms has pointed out. (Former LCMS President Oliver Harms had suggested this possibility to District presidents who had opposed ALC fellowship.)

"The president of the Synod wishes to also take this opportunity to again plead with congregations and the District presidents involved to reconsider their action." (Italics added)

MR. Kenneth E. Markworth, once the full-time executive secretary of the Central Illinois District, recently resigned his full-time position rather than resign his ELIM board membership. The Central Illinois Board has taken a firm stand on Mr. Markworth making a choice between the two groups.

Historical-Critical

(Continued from Page 1)

7) *Bultmann then would be more 'conservative' than the 19th century?* Not at all! Bultmann accepted "hook, line, and sinker" the antisupernaturalistic attitude of the 19th century scholars who could not accept the miraculous. The 19th century scholars said that Jesus *did* say some of the words that the Gospels attribute to him. Bultmann was sure of next to nothing in regard to what Jesus said and did. What Bultmann did was to attempt to find the communities which originated the words of Jesus.

8) *Doesn't Bultmann say that the words that Jesus spoke were really spoken by Him, at least in some form?* No, according to Bultmann, Jesus did not speak the words attributed to Him. These were put into His mouth by a community. Bultmann has allegedly identified these communities as Jewish, Greek, and a combination of these two.

9) *What do the followers of Bultmann say? Do these agree with him?* To a man, they accept his antisupernaturalistic bias which does not allow a belief in miracles. Some have said that the writer of the Gospel and not the community put the words in the mouth of Jesus. Many say that the community first put these words in the mouth of Jesus and then the writer used a "hunt and pick" method of choosing what to include and exclude. Others have no interest how the words of Jesus and accounts of His life developed, but are only interested in how the writer put them down when he wrote.

10) *According to these men, aren't there any words of Jesus of which these men say we can be sure?* Most scholars will individually favor as original or authentic certain words of Jesus, but these scholars have no agreement among themselves what these words are. If they see Jesus as a rabbi, they favor "proverbial" sayings. If they see Jesus as a visionary with future hopes, they favor as more possibly authentic those sayings where Jesus speaks to the end of the world and judgment.

11) *Then does it all depend on the "mind set" of the scholar?* Yes! The scholar takes an idea and accepts what he finds in the Gospels that agree with his predetermined conclusions and rejects what doesn't. Let me state again, there is no such thing as the "Historical-Critical Method." It is at best a collection of diverse and contradictory methods of studying the Bible to find out who really said and did what. Any search for "scientific and objective conclusions" is pure folly. How can diverse and contradictory methods come to the same conclusions? Not only is it impossible, but the conclusions of the scholars demonstrate the not unexpected contradictions.

12) *The point has been made that there is no one factor in the method which holds the historical critics together. Why are so many conservatives concerned about the method? Is there one point where a specific criticism can be directed?* Those who have objected to what is called the "Historical-Critical Method" do so because they see a denial of the miraculous and even the very history contained in the Bible. They are absolutely right in this concern.

13) *Do all users of the "Historical-Critical Method" deny the miraculous in the same way?* Some say that the "miraculous" in the Bible was simply the way primitive people looked at events for which there were perfectly natural explanations. This idea is still popular today in one way or another. Others say the "miracle" was invented in the mind of the writer or early Christian community. Still others call "faith" or the sun's rising "miracles" and for them there are no special "miracles." There are many variations on the denial of miracles, but the end result is completely the same.

14) *Can you give me an example of how a miracle is denied?* The account of the Virgin Birth of Jesus is a good ex-

ample since most Christians know this story. Some say Mary and Joseph had relations before they were permitted to cohabit legally. Others more crassly suggested that Jesus' father was a Roman soldier stationed in Palestine during the occupation—a crude idea, very ancient, but like many other ideas it still surfaces as something novel. Bultmann states that the account of the Virgin Birth came into existence in a Greek or Egyptian community when it first heard of the message about Jesus. Its members wanted to do something nice for Jesus, so they "invented" the story of His Virgin Birth to "enhance" His person. This type of procedure can be duplicated for every single account in our Lord's life.

15) *You always mention examples from the Gospels. What about the rest of the Bible and what the "Historical-Critical Method" does?* Some get the impression that the "Historical-Critical Method" is concerned about some little known stories in the Old Testament. We should be concerned about everything. But the prominent users of what is called the "Historical-Critical Method" put their biggest question marks over the person of Jesus, His Life, His death, and His resurrection.

16) *Can't the "Historical-Critical Method" be used with what some people call "Lutheran presuppositions"?* There has been much talk about this in the Missouri Synod and I don't see how this can be done for several reasons. (A) The "Historical-Critical Method" users claim to be "objective and scientific." Is it really possible to be "objective" and then to put on "Lutheran eyeglasses" to read the new Testament? (B) No well known higher critical scholar uses the method with "Lutheran presuppositions," though some in the Missouri Synod make the claim. (C) Lutherans state that their Confessions are based on the Bible and take their theology from the Bible. Lutherans do not take their interpretation of the Bible from the Confessions.

17) *Isn't it "Lutheran" and "confessional" to read the Bible with "Lutheran presuppositions"?* NO! Lutherans claim that Lutheran doctrine was taught by the Bible even before Luther came along and even if Luther did not come along that same doctrine would be found in the Bible. Biblical doctrine, is not derived from the Lutheran Confessions, but doctrines of the Lutheran Confessions are derived from the Bible. Any other way is putting the cart before the horse and is simple nonsense. It would be like reading the thoughts of Confucius through the presuppositions of the Sayings of Mao Tse Tung. You might know what Chairman Mao says, but you would not know what Confucius said. The Bible is a clear book and people who never heard of Luther can understand it. Lutherans make the claim that those who read the original intent of the Bible will come to the same conclusions about Christian doctrine that the Lutheran Confessions have.

18) *Then why all this talk about using the "Historical-Critical Method" with "Lutheran presuppositions"?* Those who say that this is possible claim that the one important Lutheran doctrine is the Gospel and only agreement in this is required.

19) *Well, wasn't Luther known for his rediscovery of the Gospel?* Luther brought to prominence that the purpose of everything in the Bible was ultimately the preaching of the forgiveness of sins of troubled sinners. He did not say that this was the only doctrine or the only doctrine needed for agreement. To say otherwise is to deny everything which he spoke and wrote. Luther would not surrender one single doctrinal detail. He only made the point that all things found in the Scriptures, revealed by God, were to be preached for the comfort of troubled sinners. Luther had no quarrel with the Church of Rome that what the Bible reports as having happened did in fact happen. Here there was perfect agreement. Luther argued with Rome on how the Bible was to be preached. Anyone who says that Luther

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The Relationship Between Evangelism And Pure Doctrine In the Light of The Mission Controversy

TO some members of the Missouri Synod, the continuing controversy between the Mission Board majority and certain members of the Mission staff is at best secondary to the educational controversy (Concordia Seminary versus Seminop, the River Forest situation, etc.) which needlessly distracts and may even prolong a swift resolution of that burning issue, or at worst is an interference on the part of conservative Mission Board members with the great mission and evangelistic task of Christ's Church.

It is the burden of this article, that it is precisely in the area of evangelism that doctrinal differences are most likely to become apparent. Take, for example, the matter of baptism. Some time ago a local Baptist pastor proposed that we unite in an evangelistic endeavor. I pointed out that if we did unite in such an effort, as soon as we get one convert our differences would become evident: should we baptize him or not, and if so, how?

Consider the matter of the nature of the task of the church . . . is our task to win the lost? or to tell Congress how to vote on given legislative issues? Or what happens after death . . . is there a hell or is there not? One's position would come out in evangelism. Or consider the doctrine of the means of grace: does the Holy Spirit work with or independently of the Word of God? How one answers this will vitally affect his evangelistic message and methods. Or the doctrines of conversion or election: do we cooperate in our own conversion or not? The mission fields certainly are a place where we have to be most concerned about pure doctrine and separation from false teachers. Matthew 7:15 and Romans 16:17 apply to the mission task of the Church. Since doctrine in the Church must always be proclaimed evangelistically, evangelism must be concerned with sound doctrine! Jesus Himself links them in the Great Commission: "Go . . . make disciples, baptizing them" and "teaching them all things I have commanded you."

THE Bible connects pure doctrine and evangelism. In Acts 20:18-35 Paul reminded the elders of Ephesus of "how I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus." Later, he says, "I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears." (New International Version) Even as an evangelist and missionary, Paul was concerned about false doctrine; yes, even on the mission fields!

Another example of the marriage of evangelistic concern to sound doctrine in Paul's theology is seen in II Timothy 4:5 where the great apostle urges us to "do the work of an evangelist" in a context that is concerned about maintaining sound doctrine based on the Scriptures over against the false doctrines of men (II Timothy 3:1-4:4).

The goal of our evangelistic ministry is *certainty* of faith. John writes (I John 5:13) "These things have I written unto you

that believe in the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." Uncertainty and relativism are opposed to all evangelistic and mission tasks because the evangelist is always seeking to assure the sinner that his sins are forgiven through Christ and that in Him we may be sure that we will have everlasting life. Yet unionism (church fellowship and cooperation without doctrinal agreement) is the offspring of doctrinal indifference and uncertainty. It is a denial of the clarity of Scripture and results from saying that God's Word is not clear on so-called "secondary doctrines."

THE crucial battleground in the Synod today, therefore, is not only on the seminary campuses, but also in the mission field, and between the Mission Board and the "missionex" project. In the classroom false doctrines can be *taught* and that is bad enough. But on the mission field false doctrine can be *applied*, and that is all the worse! We must avoid calling into mission work those who wish to build on human reason or numerical strength through the ecumenical movement. That's not where our strength lies! "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to tear down strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." (II Corinthians 10:4-5, New International Version)

Cooperation with false teachers in evangelistic and mission endeavors, moreover, is unscriptural and in disobedience to Jesus' command to "Beware of false prophets" (Matthew 7:15).

We may be called narrow, negative and non-cooperative in our obedience to God's Word. His Word is clear: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." (Romans 16:17 KJV) We cannot "mark" and "avoid" the errorists by deliberately making common cause with those who are confused and wrong even about the meaning of the Gospel itself. Our Lord commands us to "make disciples," but in the same breath He instructs us to teach them "all things whatever I have commanded you."

Throughout it all, we have the Lord's promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." Let's be faithful to His Word, rest in His promise and support the Mission Board in its endeavor to maintain sound doctrine and correct unionism on the mission field. The Gospel itself is at stake!

The Reverend Curtis A. Peterson, Pastor
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Rock Falls, Illinois

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On the News Front (Continued from Page 3)

FEW Missourians perhaps understand how many attempts have been made and are underway to achieve the healing of the wounds within the church. These include the work of the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Conciliation, a committee of 20 formed to involve others in parallel discussions to resolve Missouri's problems, the efforts of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the church to bridge the gap between traditional Missouri and its dissidents—an effort which involved many man hours of work in repeated meetings, and the effort of Synod's president, most recently announced, to meet with district presidents whose actions concerning Seminex students threaten the stability of the church.

SPEAKING to the clergy of his church, C. S. Lewis insisted that lines must be drawn beyond which their doctrine will cease to be Anglican and/or Christian.

He continues, "I think it is your duty to fix the lines clearly in your own minds: and if you wish to go beyond them you must change your profession.

"This is your duty not specially as Christians or as priests but as honest men. There is a danger here of the clergy developing a special professional conscience which obscures the very plain moral issue. Men who have passed beyond these boundary lines . . . are apt to protest that they have come by their unorthodox opinions honestly. In defense of those opinions they are prepared to suffer obloquy and to forfeit professional advancement. Thus they come to feel like martyrs. But this simply misses the point which so gravely scandalizes the layman. We never doubted that your unorthodox opinions were honestly held: what we complain of is your continuing your ministry after you have come to hold them. We always knew that a man who makes his living as a paid agent of the Conservative Party may honestly change his views and honestly become a Communist. What we deny is that he can honestly continue to be a Conservative agent and to receive money from one party while he supports the policy of another."

You may draw your own applications. But it is obvious that the problems that beset us are not limited to our era or to our own denominational family.

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Affirm

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

All correspondence, editorial material, contributions, and communications about subscriptions should be addressed to:

Affirm

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4040 West Fond du Lac Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216

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Fundamental (Continued from Page 2)

authorship has been rejected. It was to His disciples and apostles that Christ had promised the Holy Spirit, who would guide them into all truth and that the Spirit of Truth would bring back to their remembrance all that they heard from the lips of Jesus both before and after His death and resurrection. Apostolicity is one of the important characteristics of an inspired or canonical book.

The Historical-Critical Method had and still does repudiate basic and elementary rules of Biblical interpretation, employed by Luther, Melancthon, and the authors of the Formula of Concord. The founding fathers of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod employed the same methods of interpretation and in our colleges and seminaries these were taught until the invasion by a new breed of Biblical scholars who were taught and are committed to types of criticism that requires them to negate basic rules of Lutheran interpretation.

Dr. Raymond F. Surburg
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

A Letter To District Presidents

THE District Presidents
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Dear Brothers:

I am writing to you as a veteran who has served longer than fifty-five years in the ministry of our church, the first seven years as a parish pastor at the time when our beautiful Concordia Seminary was planted on the present campus. I have seen Concordia Seminary in its greatest glory as a stronghold of historic Lutheranism and in its deepest degradation, when the majority of its faculty went on a strike, a purely secular tool, in order to force its joint will upon the Synod instead of teaching and confessing Luther's theology in the classroom, where at their installation the professors had promised to teach it.

I also saw our Synod in the days of its strength and glory as a shining light in a darkened world but now see it threatened as "an organization of Christian congregations, banded together in Christian liberty for the conservation and continuance of the unity of the true faith, for the resistance to error, schism, and sectarianism in every form, for united effort in extending the Kingdom of God here on earth, for the training of pastors and teachers in the Church." See the order of your installation in the *Lutheran Agenda*, page 195.

In view of this I have observed with alarm the reports that some District Presidents are approving the request of Seminex candidates for ordination to the ministry. You are doubtless all fully aware of 4.15 and 4.17 in the *Synodical Handbook*. According to 4.15 Seminex candidates do not qualify for ordination simply because they have not received endorsement by the proper faculty. This fact is also clearly indicated by various actions these past months on the part of the Board of Control of Concordia Seminary, the Board for Higher Education, the Board of Directors, the Commission on Constitutional Matters, and also by the actions of the Council of Presidents in the May meetings of this year, in which you Presidents agreed that there should be no placement of candidates contrary to the Synod's Constitution.

WHEN you, my brothers, were inducted as District Presidents, you were asked: "Will you endeavor faithfully to perform all the duties of such offices [of President] as laid down in the Constitution and *by-laws* [my emphasis] of the (name of the District), and in accordance with the doctrines of Holy Writ as set forth in the Confessions of our Church, and to adorn your offices with a godly life," you promised: "Yes, with the help of God." You invoked the NAME OF GOD to bear witness to your sincerity. But the Second Commandment enjoins: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." In the secular world taking God's name in vain is called perjury. By the way, Luther's explanation of the Second Commandment is part of the Lutheran Confessions and thus belongs right into Article II of the Synod's Constitution.

Some say that people are more important than by-laws. That, however, is a false antithesis. The by-laws of the Synod's Constitution underscore the importance of the people. They are there to enhance and protect the people's good. There is certainly no good in starting out a young candidate for the holy ministry on an uncertain road of disrespect for the Constitution and its by-laws by which the church that he is to serve exists. Nor is there a great deal of love

in creating a situation that is destined to weaken a congregation's trust in the District Presidents and confidence in the ministry of their church. Congregations will be divided in calling a minister. People already ask: "Is he a Seminex candidate or not?" All of this turmoil could have been avoided if the majority faculty had not gone on a strike and their student followers on a moratorium, or if the candidates had simply honored the by-laws of their church and the directives of the Council of Presidents. (*Italics Added*)

Here, then, you have my concern for my church for our Concordia Seminary, for you. May the Lord Jesus Christ be with you and guide you.

In His name,

Dr. Lewis W. Spitz, Sr.
Professor Emeritus
Concordia Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

Historical-Critical

(Continued from Page 4)

accepted the fact that the forgiveness of sins was the only thing required for belief makes the claim only under the self-imposed danger of being labeled as historically ignorant or a downright deceiver.

20) *Isn't the problem of the "Historical-Critical Method" so complicated that the average lay persons should not concern themselves?* The issue involved here is complex, but hardly beyond comprehension. Many churches, some of them "Lutheran," have presented the "assured" results of the "Historical-Critical Method" in their adult classes and even to the children. This is done by presenting naturalistic explanations for what the Bible presents as miraculous. This procedure is followed in churches where the people have a real heritage in Bible knowledge. In a more "updated" approach, the Bible stories are almost completely ignored. There the children learn about living together, social problems like racism, ecology, corruption in politics, and colonialism, and the Bible becomes an unused book. Very few people could give a description of the "Historical-Critical Method," but they do know that something is wrong with a Sunday or Church School which doesn't teach the Bible. The large churches which permit or use what is called the "Historical-Critical Method" are experiencing a decline in membership. Most of the fundamentalistic churches are bucking this trend and are growing. One of the recognized causes is that religion without the miraculous is less than religion. This the people recognize and they respond accordingly. The Lutheran Church does not invent miracles to persuade people, but if it is faithful to the Bible it will state it is totally impermissible to deny in any way one miraculous happening in the Bible and still be a follower of Jesus, a Christian, and a Lutheran. There is more at stake in the use of the "Higher-Critical Method" than the squabbles of some theologians in St. Louis, Chicago, Springfield, or wherever. The very heart of the Christian faith is at stake! Let there be no doubt about this. Do we really want to be followers of Jesus, His words and His deeds? The "Historical-Critical Method" makes this impossible because His words and deeds are clouded and blocked out by question marks.

Dr. David P. Scaer,
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

On the News Front (Continued from Page 6)

AS these paragraphs are written, all the steps leading to the final decision concerning Dr. Tietjen's suspension have been taken with the exception that the Board of Control has not made a final determination on this matter. It is scheduled for a meeting of the Board on October 11-12.

FROM one of the conservative district papers, published in Oklahoma, comes the following item:

"OKLAHOMA EVANGEL received the following story from an Oklahoma City Missouri Synod Lutheran, recently converted to Lutheranism. We appreciate hearing from our readers, and urge you to share your experiences with us. Although we cannot print every letter we receive, we will try to print those which we feel will be of wide interest.

" 'Being about halfway through my years in life, I realized something vital was missing. I often asked myself, do I need more friends? Should I seek more pleasure and entertainment to fill this void? While all the time, I knew I was evading the answer which was ever-present in the back of my mind. God . . . God was the answer and I knew that I not only needed Him, but that I needed a church home where there would be others who needed Him and His spiritual blessings.

" 'I had never been in a Lutheran Church, but something kept telling me that this is where I could find God; a firm foundation to cling to and learn from; plus all the spiritual guidance one needs.

" 'After being a Missouri Synod Lutheran about two years, I was even more tormented and miserable than before. Every time I felt that I knew where the Synod's stand as well as mine was, I was told that this particular account or stance or view was immaterial, unimportant or too controversial to delve into. At this point I realized I was not receiving any spiritual blessings or peace of mind in my new church home. I was instead being drained of all the natural instincts God had given me toward right and wrong, good and bad. It was only after I learned that some of the lifetime Lutherans in the same congregation were as tormented as I, that I realized what a Bible-doubting, liberal pastor can do with his social Gospel to the physical, mental and spiritual welfare of an innocent youngster, a convert such as myself or even a lifetime Lutheran.

" 'I now feel I must be re-instructed by a conservative pastor, as I know now that I have been consistently misled. I have no firm foundation in the doctrines of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. There are two important things I have learned in my short time as a Lutheran: (1) While some are adhering to the Word and working for God, too many are working against Him. (2) If you are standing in the darkness of a liberal pastor's shadow, it only takes one short step to get back into the light. I thank God that He chose me to take that step and to realize in time what was happening to my relationship with my God!'" "

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"

2 Cor. 4:13

The Right of the Congregation to Judge the Doctrine of Its Pastor

WHILE Lutheran Christians will differ in their views of church polity, many are in agreement as to the autonomy of congregations. The right of the congregation to self government, to the calling of pastors, to the determining of policies is derived from the doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers. However, it may sometimes be lost sight of that included in this autonomy of the congregation is the right and duty of judging doctrine, the doctrine that is taught by the congregation in public confession and as taught by its pastor.

In a lesser known letter or treatise that Luther penned to a congregation in the little town of Leisnig, located in electoral Saxony on the river Mulde, in May, 1523 the Reformer stated an emphasis that he held for the rest of his life. Namely, that "the doctrine of the common priesthood of all believers should be the theological basis for a proper understanding of the role and authority of the pastor who is called to be 'priest of priests.'" (*Luther's Works*, volume 39, p. 304, as stated by Eric W. and Ruth C. Gritsch in the introduction to their translation of the letter). In this treatise entitled, "That a Christian Assembly or Congregation has the Right and Power to Judge all Teaching and to Call, Appoint, and Dismiss Teachers, Established and Proven by Scripture," (*Luther's Works*, volume 39, pp. 305-314) Luther maintained that the Lord Christ "takes both the right and the power to judge teaching from the bishops, scholars, and councils and gives them to everyone and to all Christians equally when he says, John 10:4, 'My sheep know my voice.'" While the bishops and pastors have the power to teach doctrine, it is the sheep of the congregation who have the right to judge the doctrine of the pastors. Bishops do not have the power to take this right away from the congregations. "You see, here Christ does not give the judgment (of ascertaining as to whether the doctrine taught by the pastors is correct or not) to prophets and teachers but to pupils or sheep . . . That is why all teachers should and must be subject to the judgment of the listeners." Luther concludes in the first section of this letter with the warning, ". . . whenever there is a Christian congregation in possession of the gospel, it not only has the right and power but also the duty—on pain of losing the salvation of its souls and in accordance with the promise made to Christ in baptism—to avoid, to flee, to depose, and to withdraw from the authority that our bishops, abbots, monasteries, religious foundations, and the like are now exercising."

IN the next section of the letter to the Leisnig congregation Luther alludes to the problem of how congregations are to have only pastors that are qualified and who are doctrinally sound. While the congregation has the "overwhelming" power "to

preach, to permit preaching, and to call," a way must be found to assist congregations to have only such pastors that can be doctrinally trusted—a way that will assure the congregations that they will be protected from false and unsound pastors. However, a way that will not in any matter lessen the right and power of the congregation to call and have that pastor that it wishes. Not even an apostle had the right to confer "the highest office of preaching on anyone by their own power without the knowledge, will, and call of the congregation."

That Luther was more than conscious of the problem and necessity of helping congregations to have only proper and sound pastors can be seen from his better known treatise "Instructions for the Visitors of Parish Pastors in Electoral Saxony." (*Luther's Works*, volume 40, pp. 263-320) In this very practical guide on church polity and conduct the father of the Reformation suggests among the duties of a "superintendent" that he "make sure that in these parishes there is correct Christian teaching, that the Word of God and the holy gospel are truly and purely proclaimed, and that the holy sacraments according to the institutions of Christ are provided to the blessing of the people." Luther further says that the superintendents are to make sure that the pastors of congregations under their charge "are not to teach or preach anything that is contrary to the Word of God or that contributes to rebellion against the government. If one or more of the pastors, or preachers," Luther continues, "is guilty of error in this or that respect, the superintendent shall call to himself those concerned and have them abstain from it, but also carefully instruct them wherein they are guilty and have erred either in commission or omission, either in doctrine or in life. But if such a one will not then leave off or desist, especially if it leads to false teaching and sedition, then the superintendent shall report this immediately to the proper official who will then bring it to the knowledge of our gracious Lord, the Elector."

IN both of these treatises can be seen the emphasis and concern of Luther that the congregations have only pastors who teach correctly the word of God. While on the one hand the congregations are supreme in their own autonomy, are to be the judges of correct doctrine, and have power and authority to call, have and depose of their own pastors, they are to be aided in this by the church through the office of the superintendent who would help the congregations and their pastors oversee their responsibility that only sound pastors in correct doctrine be allowed to to exercise the pastoral office.

(Continued on Page 7)

The Cure?

FOR more than two decades *Cross and Caduceus* has served the Lutheran Medical Mission Association of the Missouri Synod with distinction. Its voice stirred medical personnel among our membership to involvement, either direct or indirect, in the ministry of healing around the world. It was sent also to our pastors and teachers. No one will contest its valuable twitting of conscience in getting people to think about medical missions.

Recently, however, it has turned its focus in another direction, the sick and ailing body of the Missouri Synod itself, apparently feeling competent and qualified to prescribe a cure. As a result, the whole August (1974) issue of 16 pages was devoted to diagnosis and proposed treatment.

The membership itself of the Lutheran Medical Mission Association must be somewhat amazed at the procedure. In the editor's own words:

The questionnaire was sent to Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Methodists, United Church of Christ, Baptists, among others. It was mailed to bishops and archbishops, church presidents and moderators, seminary presidents and other denominational leaders, both in the United States and overseas . . .

The questionnaire was accompanied by a one-page letter giving a brief, objective chronological resume of the development of the "conservative"—"moderate" polarization in the Missouri Synod—from the election of the present administration, through the establishment of Seminex, to the resignation of mission staff members . . .

Four questions were posed, three of which were rather insignificant in view of the addressees: How does the conflict in Missouri affect Christianity in general? How should the dilemma in Missouri be solved? What's the future for Missouri?

As might be expected from such a heterogeneous group around the operating table, a hodge-podge of answers came back. What else? Many of those questioned were hardly Missouri-minded or sympathetic. Nor could they really speak to the root issue. Long ago, most of them (and their churches) had surrendered to liberalistic, modern (so-called) theology. Missouri obviously was odd-ball to most of them. To stand by Scripture's inspiration and inerrancy, to be held by 16th century Confessions, was after all the height of theological fuddy-duddyishness, not to say stupidity, in this day and age. As a matter of fact, for any church body to hang on to articles of faith with Missouri's tenacity, as though it alone had the pure doctrine, appeared to be (and was so termed!) the epitome of Phariseism. The thought never crosses such minds, of course, that the shoe fits them quite as easily, and that, they are thinking out loud; "Thank God, that we are not as other people are; so concerned with purity of doctrine that we insist that Scripture is verbally inspired and so clear that there can be no varieties of interpretation, or meaning, on given articles of faith; God preserve us from such tunnel-vision, etc.!"

THE fourth question (actually the second in the sequence), which *Cross and Caduceus* posed to its "select" panel of "experts," was:

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE MAJOR PROBLEMS IN THE MISSOURI SYNOD . . . Legalism vs. love; . . . Scriptural literalism; . . . Personality conflicts; . . . Political power grab; . . . challenge of authority; . . . Tradition vs. change; . . . (other)?

What kind of madness was this? A good number of the Medical Mission members must have asked themselves this question. The average pedestrian mind would surely wonder about things like the following:

- Which medical man picks the brains of his neighbor across the fence in the backyard when he's trying to decide what's causing the low white or red cell blood count in his patient? Especially when the neighbor knows nothing about the real issues?
- When *really* did the symptoms first appear?
- Since when are symptoms identified with the real, root illness itself? Aren't they signals of something more radically wrong?
- Moreover, does one not have to be sure he has accurately identified *valid* symptoms, and *all* of them?
- And, on that last point, isn't it curious that conspicuous by its absence among the options—and really the root cause of Christianity's illness and a truly cancerous growth!—is liberalism in theology, higher critical methodology of Biblical interpretation, neo-orthodoxy, or whatever name is given to the thinking which has led to devilish denial of the Word of God in our day?
- Is not *this* the *root cause* also of Missouri's malaise and sickness unto death? Yet it's not even mentioned! Strange! But how could it be? As it was, only 90 of the 200 to whom questionnaires had been sent bothered to reply. How many answers would there have been, do you think, if they had been asked to sit in judgment upon themselves, their own theological sell-out? For is it not a fact that almost every last one of the so-called mainline denominations has sold its soul to Modernism and the accompanying denial of treasured Biblical teachings?

NOW, then, on this last score, there's also a matter of dating, or chronology, that needs to be straightened out. *Cross and Caduceus*, along with many others in Synod, has the bad habit of beginning Missouri's "problem" with the present administration. The facts are otherwise. It was merely from about that time that the ailing body of Missouri *finally* came to the attention of the people, who had been beguiled too long with the dissembling assurance that nothing was wrong, that we've not changed doctrinally, etc.

Pardon us now, if we draw on the diagnosis of someone not immediately in our circle. When Dr. Hermann Sasse, once of the University of Erlangen and now living in retirement in Australia, first came to America after World War II, he was astounded, as he wrote just a couple of years ago, at how "Missouri had come under the influence of Modernism" already then, and specifically at the St. Louis Seminary.

That's 25 years ago! Now we're looking not at symptoms but at root causes. Finally, after a couple of decades of glossing over the issues, Missouri has had to face its ailment out in the public eye. Naturally, the stand-off is all the more bitter now.

At the Chicago ELIM meeting (cp. *Time*, Sept. 9, 1974), Dr. John Tietjen resonated:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod we have known is dead. The institution that has given us life is no more. Its structures are hopelessly corrupt. Its leadership is morally bankrupt. Its rank-and-file members have chosen to ignore and overlook evil.

(Continued on Page 7)

Do They Really Want Peace?

IN the present doctrinal controversy liberals speak much of love, reconciliation and healing. They say they want peace in the church. Conservatives ask themselves whether the liberals really mean it. Do they really want peace? It is a fair question. It requires an honest answer.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." Using that test, let us run a triple check—*doctrinal position, actions taken, and policies followed.*

Is there any real evidence of a desire for peace in the doctrinal stance of the liberals? At the center of the controversy, or near it, is the Historical-Critical Method of Biblical interpretation. For many years it had been "taught" at our St. Louis Seminary, but only to show its weaknesses and to demonstrate that, if carried to its logical and theological conclusions, it can only lead to the ultimate deterioration and even destruction of our Christian faith.

Coming out of German rationalism and absorbed by some of our men taking advanced degrees in liberal theological schools here and abroad, the Historical-Critical Method gradually infiltrated our St. Louis faculty until it was tolerated by almost all, openly espoused by some, and declared to be absolutely essential to Biblical interpretation by the then seminary president.

In the calls for peace, and throughout all the various meetings, forums, and dialogs, has there been any solid evidence of a willingness to back away from this method of interpretation and to abide by Synod's doctrinal stance?

The answer is no.

ANOTHER valid test of the cry for peace lies in actions taken. In the formation of ELIM a church within our church has been established. ELIM has been rationalized as a "confessional stance," "a chance to be heard," and "an opportunity to protest against injustices." But the fact is that ELIM has set up its own ministerial educational program (Seminex), its own independent mission program, and its own administrative machinery. To support these endeavors, it is syphoning a million dollars a year out of the Missouri Synod.

Jesus said, "A house divided against itself shall not stand." The formation and continuation of ELIM has put us on a crash course for the destruction of Synod.

In those who plead for peace have we seen any reconciling fruits indicating repentance of the massive damage done to the church and a present desire to undo previous actions?

The answer is no.

To the contrary, since its August convention in Chicago, ELIM has further developed its denominational functions; Seminex opened its fall term with the arrogant assertion on the cover of the opening exercises bulletin that this is its 136th academic year; and ELIM's mission program continues its unabated efforts to belittle and hamper Synod's extensive mission program and to disturb Synod's relationship with its sister churches in other countries.

A third test, as one evaluates the sincerity of the plea for peace, may be made in the area of the policies followed by Missouri's liberal wing. Consider one example. To date, eight District presidents have authorized the ordination of uncertified Seminex graduates. They have thus deliberately and unknowingly violated clear synodical by-laws. In so doing they have adopted the policy that they are above the law and may dis-

regard at will the synodical regulations which we in the Missouri Synod have voluntarily accepted as the way in which we lovingly carry on together our God-given work in a manner that is both decent and orderly.

MEANWHILE, as background music to these strident acts of anarchy, we hear in accents sweet the plea for peace. But do they really want peace? Is there any indication, however meager, that these District presidents now realize the implications of a policy that rationalizes rebellion, fosters synodical anarchy, and tries to say that we can be a walking-together (the root meaning of the word "Synod") and yet walk apart whenever it suits someone to do so?

Have these District presidents shown any signs of seeing the enormity of their sin against the church as they violate what they have vowed to uphold? Put another way, has there been any change in the policy of permissiveness to match the words which say they want reconciliation?

The answer is no.

In our congregations, when someone says, "I want to be reconciled with my brother," we look first of all for repentance. By definition this means a change of heart. And it also involves a change in deeds. Then there can be and there will be reconciliation and peace. But only then.

It is so in a parish. It is so in a Synod.

The Reverend Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

Affirm

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

All correspondence, editorial material, contributions, and communications about subscriptions should be addressed to:

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A Brief History of Balance, Inc.

SEVERAL important events led the majority of the delegates to the launching of this corporation: Because the delegates to the Denver Synodical Convention were convinced that the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was headed for doctrinal trouble and administrative problems, these same delegates decided to provide new leadership for the denomination. This they did in the summer of 1969 by electing to the presidency of the Synod, Dr. J. A. O. Preus. Dr. Preus was known to stand for an unwavering loyalty to the Verbally Inspired Word of God; he espoused historical Christianity, proclaimed by the Lutheran Reformation and acclaimed as the cornerstone of Missouri Synod theology from its founding days.

Even before the delegates left Denver, many of the so-called conservatives met and provided for continued efforts on behalf of the LC-MS to bring the Synod back to its sound, theological moorings. Thus the Continuation Committee was formed. The committee's very name suggested that its assignment was to carry on the work started at Denver.

A meeting was called by these concerned laymen and clergymen. It took place in September, Labor Day to be exact, 1969. At this meeting the representatives from the various syn-

odical districts created Balance, Inc. The necessary regulations were passed to allow steps to be taken towards incorporating as a non-profit, charitable organization. Eventually the incorporation did take place in the state of Ohio. Dr. Robert Preus, brother of the Synod's President, and recently elected president of our seminary in Springfield was elected chairman of the Board of Trustees. He is still serving in that capacity. The secretary is Mr. Marcus Braun of Kansas City, Mo; Mr. Henry Meier of De Kalb, Ill., is the treasurer.

THE charter of Balance makes it the financial arm of the Continuation Committee. Balance, Inc., was asked to gather funds in a proper way, in compliance with synodical regulations. This was, and is, being done. Furthermore, Balance, Inc., was charged to provide such printed information and other communications as would be needed to inform the membership of Synod concerning the course the church was following in re-establishing sound doctrine and practice in our midst. It was charged to keep clearly before our Christians the issues involved in the current struggle.

As a result, Balance, Inc., established an Editorial Committee and published *Affirm*. The circulation of *Affirm* at this writing is near the 90,000 mark and growing. This growth attests to the need for such a magazine.

Balance, Inc., has found it difficult to meet all the needs which have become apparent in the course of months; for that reason the corporation has recently appointed a National Coordinator, who will be helpful in encouraging private donations. He is Mr. Fred Heisler of Mt. Prospect, Ill.

Balance, Inc. is an intensely interesting phenomenon in the history of the church. Born in a period of intense strife, it is writing blessed chapters of consecration and devotion to the cause of sound Lutheranism on the part of an ever increasing number of laymen, laywomen, and pastors—all Christians of great faith and conviction. Eternity will reveal the extent of the services these rendered to their Savior and church.

Postscript: There is a group of men who, though informed repeatedly of their error, still persist in confusing a publication under the name of "Balance" with "Balance, Inc." "Balance" was a magazine which enjoyed a brief period of publication before the Denver Synodical Convention in 1969. Its purpose was to alert the church in general and the delegates to that convention, in particular, to the issues of the liberal, modern theology making inroads into the church. The publication was an outgrowth of a letter called "Faith Forward First Concerns." That letter was a clarion call to the church to become aware of the dangers threatening from within the structure of the church body. Accordingly, the publication "Balance" and the corporation "Balance, Inc." are two separate entities altogether and should not be confused with each other.

A Comment on 'A Layman Analyzes'

Somewhere on these pages you will find an article entitled "A Layman Analyzes Events in Missouri." Before printing it, *Affirm* sought the reactions to it of a variety of people. They all found it helpful in understanding what Missouri now experiences.

Affirm need not identify for its readers what parts of the article deal with conservatives and what parts with those with liberal leanings. That aspect of the article seems self-evident.

What the author has done well is point out, without entering into the pros and cons of the theology under debate in Missouri, the general nature of the Synod's structure, the roles its leaders must play, some possible roles of dissenters, and also point out the difference between reality and emotions about reality.

Affirm believes his paragraphs can help you in coming to grips personally with the issues.

A Layman Analyzes Events in Missouri

RECENTLY a group of several hundred people had the privilege of participating in a meeting at which two of Christ's gentlemen* discussed the present controversy in the Missouri Synod. In many ways it was a delightful afternoon due primarily to the intelligent manner in which issues were presented as well as the general warmth and fellowship that took place between most of the Christians present regardless of differences of opinion.

Generally speaking, however, it was an enigmatic experience because in this controversy it is difficult to know what part of the discussion content is based on facts and what part on emotions. Emotions tend to create a lot of little issues. In order to prevent a lot of little issues from obfuscating the central issue, facts must be established apart from emotions, and the genesis of the emotions that confuse the issue must be investigated.

Certain facts are evident. The basic issue centers around the way in which the Bible is correctly interpreted. This was an issue a long time before the persons now struggling with it were elected or appointed. In recent years the community of saints has not been able to effect a solution upon which all parties can agree. The controversy reached a point at which there was a break, some people withdrawing from the power structure while others were dismissed. The people involved have polarized into several groups two of which carry the designation of conservative and moderate. Generally speaking, persons have lined up on either side of the issue in hopes of resolving it.

THESE are simply facts which must be accepted at this point. However, when a break occurs and sides are taken and a solution of the same basic issue is still sought by both sides, certain principles come into play. To avoid confusion and emotionalism, all participants must recognize these basic principles:

FIRST: The people who hold power will have to insist on maintaining the framework in which this power is set up. If it is possible, an attempt can be made to change the framework, but it must never be bypassed unless revolution is planned.

SECOND: Any group of people who feel the power structure of their organization acts unfairly in the administration of rules and regulations and who refuse to submit to these rules and break away from the power group will be left with a martyr's

stance. They are in no position to legally demand anything from anyone as it concerns the power structure from which they are separated. Short of physical confrontation their best recourse is to purport to be open, loving, and willing to die for the cause. In moments of frustration, martyrs can appropriately call attention to their cause by rending their clothes and throwing dust into the air.

THIRD: The people who hold the legal power and insist on maintaining the framework in which the power is set up can be called legalists simply because they refuse to change the delegated rules.

It should be pointed out that not in question here is whether the break was necessary at all or precipitous. It happened and must be dealt with. Also not in question here is whether people who hold the power are using their position to exercise their own possible legalistic needs, nor in question here is whether those who lacking in power structure, use this stance to satisfy their possible needs to be martyred.

When we accept the fact that because of the break there are those who are limited to a martyr's stance as well as those who must administer delegated rules, we will not use a man's position as a means of criticizing or judging his actions in order to justify our own position.

This should clear up a lot of confusion and help us once more to take definitive action that God commands in Joel 2:12,13:

Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; And rend your heart, and *not your garments**, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. (* my emphasis)

Robert DeVries, A.C.S.W.
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*Rev. Karl L. Barth, President, South Wisconsin District, LCMS.
Dr. Ralph W. Klein, Seminex Professor.

Reflections on the International Congress on World Evangelization

IN 1966 the first World Congress on Evangelization was held in Berlin. It brought together more than 1,000 participants and concentrated primarily on a thorough discussion of the theology of evangelism. The statement of faith which it produced was a very well-written and positive statement concerning the mission of a church.

Berlin precipitated many local congresses, both in our country and abroad. Lausanne, however, was different. First it was in every sense an international congress. There was no longer the great predominance of European and American participants. Indians and Africans and Asians were not only present in great numbers, but very active. Over 40 Nigerians alone attended the congress. Lausanne was different also in another respect. It emphasized cross-cultural evangelism. About a fourth of the participants were engaged directly in that kind of evangelical labor, which is by far the most challenging and difficult and which is so desperately needed in our day when hundreds of millions of people simply cannot be reached in any way by the existent churches and evangelistic and missionary organizations. They cannot be reached because of linguistic and cultural barriers. Lausanne attempted to cope with this great challenge.

The Lausanne meeting was significant also because the world situation in missions today is so extremely open and challenging. Never have so many people been open to the Gospel. At Lausanne we learned of tremendous advances of the Gospel in northeast India, Korea, New Guinea and in many parts of Africa and South America. In many of these areas, the Christian church is growing at a rate four or five times that of the population in general. It is truly a time when Christians should pool their resources, pray and work and plan to continue carrying out the Great Commission. The fields are white unto harvest. In Africa alone, the Christian population has grown from twenty to seventy million since 1945, and Africa may well be the most Christian continent on the globe by the turn of our century. On the other hand, Europe is a barren wasteland depicted by one clergyman as "one vast mission field," and this challenge, too, faced the participants at Lausanne.

Another factor in today's world challenged the participants at Lausanne, namely, the restive pessimism so common everywhere. The turning of thousands to the occult, to astrology, to magic and other superstitions, reveals a longing in men for something eternal and spiritual which their present cultures, philosophies and religions could never offer.

THE purposes of Lausanne were many. First, these people came together to see how they might face more effectively the Great Commission of evangelizing the world. The congress also tried to re-emphasize the Biblical concepts which are so essential to evangelism. In this area, however, it is my opinion that they came short of the Berlin congress. The congress also tried to assess carefully and honestly the churches resources to evangelize the world, and to establish the kinds of contacts and relationships that could most effectively employ these resources. In the minds of some of the conveners, like Billy Graham, organization was also a purpose of the congress. However, at Lausanne little was done to continue any formal organization. Many deplored this fact. Some of us, however, felt that it was a real advantage. The people there were in no position to organize some new ecumenical or mission group.

My reaction as a Lutheran to a congress is hard to summarize in a few words. The great seriousness and dedication and the sincerity of the participants was truly remarkable. The intelligent and helpful participation by Indians, Africans and Asians was very encouraging. I was not personally so impressed with the representatives from South America who seemed more interested sometimes in talking about the challenges facing the church. The amount of expertise and knowledge and understanding present at this congress was vast, and the tragedy is that those of us who attended were unable to make use of it all. There were many, many meetings on various aspects of evangelization conducted at the same time and one simply had to choose between them. Probably a majority of all mission work done in the world was represented there in Lausanne a tremendous amount of experience and expertise from which one could draw.

THEOLOGICALLY, the congress was probably not as successful as the earlier congress at Berlin. It was not the purpose of this congress to emphasize the theology of evangelism so much as the more practical aspects of it. The charismatic movement as a factor in world evangelism was downplayed even though many charismatics were present at the congress. Heartening also was the fact that millennialism which has dominated the thought of many evangelicals of late was also downplayed for the most part and did not seem to be a part of the Gospel which most of the participants believed and taught. Tragically, baptism was practically ignored as any kind of vehicle of the spirit's work in evangelism.

The congress produced "The Lausanne Covenant," a doctrinal statement dealing with the mission of the church, but touching more of the practical aspects of evangelism. I rather doubt that most Lutherans would have signed the covenant, because there were certain theological points that were not sufficiently clear. The means of grace and baptism, as the Spirit's vehicle for evangelization, were simply ignored. Sometimes it appeared as if the Spirit's illumination in people's minds was immediate and direct without the written or spoken Word at all. Church was made the means of evangelism virtually rather than the Word and Sacrament. The doctrine of the church and of church unity was quite confused as when the statement says that "our disunity undermines the doctrine of reconciliation." Fortunately there was very little reference to millennialism in the document. The covenant's statements concerning Scripture were particularly good. All in all, the covenant was as good a statement as one could expect. Time did not permit many necessary improvements to be made.

I believe that practically all of those who attended the congress derived great benefit from it. Simply to meet and talk with these people from all over the world about their activities enlarged one's vision and helped one to see the issues, the challenges, and some of the solutions to carrying out the church's Great Commission. In the future it would be my hope that there could be some kind of close liaison between mission societies, missionaries, evangelists, theological professors and teachers so as to provide an ongoing source of information and help to all people involved in world mission. I believe that this will be one of the many good results of the Lausanne congress.

Dr. Robert Preus, President
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

The Cure? . . .

(Continued from Page 2)

Cross and Caduceus takes up this dour litany of terrible charges and casts into the teeth of Synod (from which it has drawn its life and support) and taunt formulated by one of its 90 respondents:

The administration has staked its whole position on an attitude toward Scripture which is not only un-Lutheran but also un-Christian . . . a mixture of 16th century Calvinistic fundamentalism, 17th century Lutheran scholasticism, and 19th century rationalism. The Lutheran Reformation's concept of the centrality of the Gospel has been distorted beyond recognition.

How does one account for blasts like these? Modernism in Missouri has finally been cornered; it now feels itself challenged! Probably Missouri was the last large church body in the world where this could have happened, simply because it still had a concern for purity, continuity, loyalty, stability in doctrine. Against that, cornered theologians can be expected to fight with every trick in the book.

Every layman and laywoman in Synod, also every pastor and teacher, ought to be asking: How was it that Modernism—with its devilish denial of fundamental doctrines taught in God's Holy Word, the Scriptures—could infect Missouri, which had enjoyed good health until about the time of the early "forties?" Up till then weren't its spirit, teaching and outreach good? with many missions, at home and abroad, opening up every year? with good growth in the parishes, the Christian day schools, radio and TV ministries, etc.? Dr. Sasse, as a friend from abroad who had admired and felt true fellowship with Missouri's staunch and vigorous life and witness, put it this way a couple of years ago (and he was answering the question posed by *Cross and Caduceus* long before it was asked). "They wanted to come out of the ghetto in which their church had lived in isolation."

So, that was it! Respectability in the eyes of others! The same syndrome at work in *Cross and Caduceus*! We're reminded of Israel chasing after its neighbors and their gods. Instead of being concerned about one thing only, our stewardship before the judgment of God's eyes! Read what St. Paul has to say about this in I Cor. 4, 1-5. And, then, hold on to the one resolve that he had:

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20, 24)

Missouri needs such single-mindedness, under the authority of the prophetic and apostolic Word, as it needs nothing else!

Dr. Eugene F. Klug
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

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On the News Front:

The Eight District Presidents

WHEN the District presidents (Council of Presidents) met in September, synodical President Dr. J. A. O. Preus reported that eight District presidents had violated the regulations of Synod by authorizing the ordinations of 26 uncertified Seminex graduates.

The eight District presidents are:

Rev. John Baumgaertner, English
Rev. Harold Hecht, English (Baumgaertner's successor)
Rev. Paul Jacobs, California-Nevada
Rev. Waldemar Meyer, Colorado
Rev. Rudolph Ressmeyer, Atlantic
Rev. Robert Riedel, New England
Rev. Walter Zeile, New Jersey.

Commenting on the action of these District presidents, Dr. Preus stated, "This action of eight District presidents has brought the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to a very grave hour in her history. Not only has the corporate integrity of the Council of Presidents been virtually destroyed so that any future resolutions of that body will have little credibility, but the very life of our church body is threatened by the deliberate violation of constitutional authority. The ordination of these young men who have refused to be interviewed by Concordia Seminary is null and void in our Synod, and the District presidents who have authorized these ordinations have violated their office."

Dr. Preus added that he plans to meet with each of the eight men and concluded, "If such efforts prove fruitless, I would expect these District presidents in conscience to resign their office."

Congregational Right . . .

(Continued from Page One)

There is a delicate balance between the autonomy of the congregation and the exercise of any overseeing office that helps the congregation to maintain purity of Doctrine and Gospel in the public office of the pastoral ministry—one that is not often kept. However, it is necessary to maintain this balance, and in such a way that congregations are able to carry out their authority to judge doctrine, to call and depose of their own pastors, and that the help they receive from any overseeing authority be done to help the congregation have pastors that are doctrinally sound and faithful in their calling. The purpose of this careful balance is that congregations can always be assured that the pastors they have will teach correctly the Doctrine and Gospel in word and example. If this careful balance is maintained then the congregations will always be encouraged to exercise their right to judge all doctrine, to call only those men to the pastoral office that are doctrinally sound and trustworthy, and to depose those pastors who refuse to teach and live according to that Doctrine and Gospel to which both congregation and pastor are pledged.

In all this the concern of Luther was always evident and clear, namely, that Christ and His word be honored to the glory of God and to the salvation and benefit of God's people.

Prof. Louis A. Brighton
Concordia Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

On the News Front:

Concordia, St. Louis, Board Terminates Dr. Tietjen As President

ST. LOUIS, MO.—The Board of Control of Concordia Seminary terminated Dr. John H. Tietjen as the president of the school at a special meeting held Friday and Saturday, October 11 and 12.

The board reached a decision on ten charges of false doctrine and malfeasance that had been brought against Dr. Tietjen by two pastors, Rev. Leonard P. Buelow of Green Bay, Wis., and Rev. Harlan L. Harnapp of North Platte, Neb. The charges are, in substance:

1. Holding and defending, allowing and fostering false doctrine contrary to Article II of the Constitution of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
2. Rendering himself unable to mediate and settle doctrinal disagreements within the faculty.
3. Administrative irresponsibility.
4. Presumptuous and wrongful assumption of Board of Control duties and prerogatives.
5. Intimidation on occasion of Board of Control members.
6. Not dealing in a Christian manner with faculty members.
7. Demeaning the office of the synodical president and defying the executive authority thereof.
8. Opposing the synodical president in his efforts to resolve the doctrinal problems at the seminary.
9. Insubordination to the authority of the Board for Higher Education.
10. Failing to maintain careful watch over the spiritual welfare, personal life and conduct of the student body.

The board met in executive session during which they heard testimony from former Concordia Seminary professor Dr. Richard R. Caemmerer, in addition to the two pastors bringing the charges.

Although Dr. Tietjen had been afforded the opportunity to appear before the board, Chairman E. J. Otto reported that Dr. Tietjen stated he would not attend, since he had "parental responsibilities." Rev. Otto said he called Dr. Tietjen and was told that Dr. Tietjen planned to visit his daughter at St. Olaf's College in Northfield, Minn.

Dr. Tietjen has repeatedly stated openly that he would take no action in his own defense since the proceedings offer no possibility of a fair and impartial judgment. Although Dr. Tietjen has declined the opportunity of appeal, a privilege extended under the Synod's Constitution and Bylaws, he would still have ninety days to appeal the decision if he so desires.

Chairman Otto said: "The board felt that it was only proper that Dr. Tietjen be notified of the board's decision first. While it is certainly within his rights to release those findings publicly, we do regret his continued statements that the proceedings have been a charade. In reality, this has been a most difficult and trying experience for every member of the board. Dr. Tietjen has been offered repeated opportunities to appear before a variety of official synodical bodies to state officially his concerns. This he continues to refuse to do. He now says he will not appeal the decision, but he continues to attack the church of which he is a member. It would seem to me that for the sake of the church Dr. Tietjen should bring his concerns to the proper bodies of the Synod."

"The board would plan to discuss at its next meeting the release of a report to the church including all pertinent materials after the period for appeal has expired. While we realize the deep interest of the church in this unusual time, we feel that release of this material would not be in the best interests of Dr. Tietjen when its release could jeopardize a future appeal."

Since a sustained charge of false doctrine could disqualify Dr. Tietjen as a pastor in the Synod under the Bylaws, Dr. Tietjen's District president will be given a transcript of the entire proceedings for his consideration. Dr. Tietjen, who is 46 years old, became president of the seminary in the spring of 1969. Dr. Ralph A. Bohlmann is serving as acting president of the school

Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls, within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"

2 Cor. 4:13

PUBLICATION schedules and the difficulties of the mail service, especially during the holiday season, will probably prevent us from wishing you a Blessed Christmas and Christ-centered New Year before these events! Please accept our belated holiday greetings—for the Lord's richest blessings on you and yours during 1975!

CONSERVATIVES should not underestimate the vigor of the effort being made by those with liberal inclinations to prevail at the Anaheim Convention next summer. The conservative response will, by grace, be an intensification of work on behalf of the conservative cause, prayer, and a vast effort at reconciliation before and during the convention. The most important conservative task, *Affirm* believes, is to help all Missourians understand the issues at stake, the doctrines threatened, and the dangerous nature of that threat.

A recent analysis, apparently valid, of conservatives and liberals within Missouri underlines the fact that her conservatives are issue-oriented while those with liberal leanings are people-oriented. This analysis simply confirms what many conservatives have been privately stating the last years—that a large part of the liberal approach consists of *ad hominem* appeals and arguments and that the conservative effort to come to grips with issues, rather than deal in personalities, has often been frustrated by the moderate approach. Over the past few years it has been the conservatives' role to try to focus the Synod's attention on the real and deep theological questions which lie at the base of Missouri's trouble.

STILL another effort at reconciliation has gotten underway. Whatever its official name, it has become known as the "Committee of Five and Five," i.e., five representatives of the conservatives and five of those who tend toward liberalism. One of the strangest features of the composition of this committee is that Dr. John Tietjen will sit on it with Dr. J. A. O. Preus. Since he has condemned Dr. Preus as "morally corrupt" and Missouri as a "dead church," *Affirm* wonders that Dr. Tietjen would agree to sit at the same conference table with such men.

IN its effort to state the issues confronting the church as clearly as possible (one of the tasks assigned to it), the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Conciliation has gotten beyond the talking stage and has started producing documents which reflect conservative thought as well as the thought of those with liberal inclinations. The ACDC committee is scheduled to make its report to the Anaheim Convention and all Missourians will pray that the committee's work will serve to pinpoint the different theologies which now exist in Missouri as well as offer some further methods for achieving a healing of Missouri's wounds.

AS the struggle in Missouri seems to intensify, groups within a greater number of districts are publishing regularly on behalf of the conservative effort. All of us connected with *Affirm* appreciate this effort, hope and pray that it will continue at least to Anaheim and, under God, achieve its aim. If you haven't as yet, please put *Affirm* on your publication's mailing list!

IN an effort to give the students in their last year at Seminex an opportunity to enter Missouri's ministry via its regularized channels, the Board of Control of the St. Louis Sem has offered the students of this class who enroll for the Seminary's winter quarter and eventually graduate from the Seminary a regular diploma and certification for the public ministry of the church. It seems obvious that the Board is taking extraordinary steps to be helpful to these students and the church and to effect a reconciliation with those who dissent.

ELSEWHERE in this issue you will find some of the resolutions adopted jointly by Missouri's two seminaries, her St. Louis and her Springfield schools. While the resolutions reflect nothing new or startling, they do express to the church the cooperation between her seminaries, the common stand of both schools on the same theological ground, and, by grace, the great strength of these two schools inwardly and, outwardly, with their combined enrollments of some 600 students.

THE following is a verbatim excerpt from the October 1974 issue of *The Iowa East Perspective* (ELIM) under the title "Pastor Osing Reacts to Tietjen Dismissal:"

"Richard Osing, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Cedar Rapids has reacted to the dismissal of John Tietjen through a letter informing the District president, John Zimmerman, of his dismay over the incident.

"In the letter, Pastor Osing states, 'I must make it abundantly clear to you that insofar as I am acquainted with him personally, and insofar as I am acquainted with his theological position, I stand with John Tietjen. I have read . . . FAITHFUL TO OUR CALLING FAITHFUL TO OUR LORD. His theological position is my theological position. I feel conscience bound to inform you, therefore, that if he is guilty of holding and promoting false doctrine then I too am guilty of holding and promoting false doctrine and it is, therefore, your duty to take the necessary steps to remove me from my office as the senior pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church.'" (After writing this letter Pastor Osing discovered that the District President could suspend a pastor from the Synod but cannot remove him from his pastoral office in a congregation.)

"In his letter, Pastor Osing states that he personally holds and publicly teaches the following four interpretations: 1) Genesis 2 and 3 are not to be interpreted in such a way that Adam and Eve must be understood as historical persons. 2) Is. 7:14 is not to be interpreted as a direct prediction of the birth of Jesus the MESSIAH. 3) The Book of Jonah is not to be interpreted as a historical narrative. 4) The narrative of the changing of water into wine in John, chap. 2, may be understood as something other than a historical event.

"Pastor Osing contends in the letter that these interpretations have come to be considered as false doctrine because the Preus Statement has become the new standard of orthodoxy since the New Orleans convention.

"Upon receiving a copy of Pastor Osing's letter, the Board of Deacons at Trinity Lutheran Church held two special meetings, one October 21 and the second on October 24. The District President and Circuit Counselor were asked by the board to be present at the second meeting. Pastor Osing was given a number of opportunities to explain his position and members of the board, likewise, explained their positions concerning his stand with Dr. Tietjen, and his ministry at Trinity. By an overwhelming majority, the board approved a resolution urging the Pastor to seek another position. In the second part of the resolution, the board encouraged Pastor Osing 'to stay in the ministry of the Missouri-Synod Lutheran Church.'

"Pastor Osing has decided to resign his pastoral office at Trinity Lutheran Church."

AFFIRM would like to underscore action of the Board of Control of our St. Louis campus, probably now a matter widely known. Since Seminex is not a part of Missouri's official educational structure: it has properly closed the doors of its invaluable library to Seminex students and faculty. Whatever protests may be made about this action, it seems entirely proper.

AFFIRM applauds the ruling of Missouri's Board for Higher Education that the members of the faculties of Missouri's schools, who belong to ELIM and support its dissent, should be dealt with in a pastoral manner. While the Board's language does not appear to be strong, it, nevertheless, seems strong to Affirm. The conclusion of pastoral dealing, if it achieves no God-pleasing result, at the minimum is the termination of a faculty member's services.

THE degrees granted (approximately 140) Seminex graduates have recently been challenged. Chicago Lutheran School of Theology—Dr. Walter Wolbrecht, President—awarded these degrees, apparently in conflict with Illinois state law which makes mandatory the awarding of degrees only after certain residential requirements have been met. The challenge pointed out that since Seminex students were educated in the State of Missouri, the Chicago school had not lived up to the laws under which they are required to operate.

THE following letter, by a respected professor emeritus, speaks for itself.

Dr. John S. Damm, Acting President
Seminex
306 North Grand Blvd.
St. Louis, Missouri 63103

Dear Dr. Damm:

Your plea for my support, as well as for that of other alumni and friends of Concordia Seminary, raises questions and calls for answers that only you can give. But since you cast your net out over many brothers in ministry, I at least need not wonder why an appeal came to me as well. But I do wonder just why I should encourage your students, to whom my heart indeed goes out in sympathy, as long as you make it a matter of conscience for them to stay away from Concordia Seminary. The route that our church has chosen for young men who would become its ministers does not include Seminex. Synod has through its boards and commissions spoken very clearly and forcefully on this point since the birth of that abortive institution.

In the second paragraph of your letter you say: "As an alumnus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, you share in a tradition of evangelical study of the Scriptures and of loyalty to the Lutheran Confessions. Now we are challenged to continue that tradition of training young people for ministry." That is ambiguous and deceptive. Does the first sentence refer to Concordia Seminary and the second to Seminex? Your hallmark shows a live green shoot growing out of the root of a dead stump. That is a beautiful symbol for the Son of Jesse (Is. 11:1), but certainly not for Seminex. To avoid any ambiguity, a hallmark showing a parasite clinging to the trunk of a fruit-laden tree would be more appropriate for an institution pleading for funds from the Missouri Synod, declared by one of your peers as dead and headed by morally corrupt officials. To avoid any misunderstanding due to ambiguity or deception, I assure you that I am not an *alumnus* of Seminex in any sense whatsoever. When you of the Seminex faculty broke the vow you made to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and to its Lord at the time of your installation as servants of the church at Concordia Seminary (*The Lutheran Agenda*, pages 121-125), you forfeited every claim to the name of Concordia Seminary, with or without the lugubrious appendant "in Exile." The Seventh Commandment says: "Thou shalt not steal." Please do not purloin the historic name of Concordia Seminary, the *alma mater* of thousands of faithful Lutheran ministers.

I am likewise not a *friend* of Seminex. Who can forget the scandal of the student boycott and of the faculty strike (unique in the history of Christendom), the white wooden crosses marring the quad, the boarding of the main entrance to the buildings, the silencing of the carillon by theft and sabotage—all to signify that Concordia Seminary was dead. But you must forgive! Indeed you do. But there is no forgiveness without repentance. To this day there has been no sign of remorse over the above and other outrages. On the contrary, you are now soliciting financial and moral support for the perpetuation of that abortive institution with which you vainly hope to supplant Concordia Seminary.

Let me assure you that I pray fervently for the professors and students of Seminex, but not for Seminex. Prayers 18 and 19 on page 103 of the *Lutheran Hymnal* are to the point. No. 18 is a prayer for the church in its conflicts, No. 19 for those who have erred. You and your peers, Dr. Damm, have erred and stirred up mortal conflicts in our church. May God lead you to see your error.

A final question: In a postscript you say, "To be tax deductible, your check must be made to 'ELIM', earmarked for 'Seminex'." Why that? Is Seminex not a recognized religious institution?

Yours for faithfulness to our calling and to the Lord,

Rev. Lewis W. Spitz, Sr.
Professor Emeritus
Concordia Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

(Underlining Added)

The Lutheran Confessions On Genesis Chapters 1-3

THE Constitution of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod states in Article II;

The Synod, and every member of the Synod accepts without reservation:

1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice;

2. All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three ecumenical creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

Many of the basic and fundamental doctrines of the Holy Scriptures have been defined in the Lutheran Confessions together with the errors which the acceptance of those doctrines logically must reject. A number of teachings and doctrines have been doubted or rejected by proponents of the Historical-Critical Method. The Historical-Critical Method is a method of Biblical interpretation which has come to employ a number of techniques such as a negative form of literary criticism, form criticism, redaction criticism, and content criticism, whose employment has had devastating effects upon the correct understanding of various doctrines held by Lutheranism since the doctrinal changes effected by the Lutheran Reformation in the sixteenth century.

Teachings and doctrines are determined by the manner in which texts of the Bible are understood and explained. Persons utilizing the Historical-Critical Method will arrive at different conclusions as to the meaning of a given text, a number of verses in a paragraph, of a chapter or even a Biblical book than will individuals employing the traditional Historical-Grammatical Method.

Since all laymen, teachers, pastors and professors of the Synod have willingly subscribed to the constitution, they are by virtue of their membership bound to follow the teachings of the Bible as set forth in the Lutheran Confessions, it is proper to ask: "What kind of hermeneutics (system of interpretation) did Luther, Melanchthon, and the various writers of the Formula of Concord resort to when interpreting the hundreds of passages that are used to establish and support their doctrinal positions in the body of the six Lutheran confessional writings or symbols?"

HISTORIANS of the history of Biblical interpretation are agreed that the Historical-Critical Method was a product of the period of the Enlightenment and therefore was certainly not known or employed by either Roman Catholic or Protestant scholars during the sixteenth century and thus it can be asserted that the formulators of Lutheran doctrines as set forth in the two Catechisms of Luther, in the two writings of Melanchthon, the Augsburg Confession, The Apology (Defense) of the Augsburg Confession, in the Smalcald Articles written by Luther and in the Formula of Concord did not employ the Historical-Critical Method but the Historical-Grammatical Method.

Users of the Historical-Critical Method do not regard the first eleven chapters of Genesis as reporting a true account of events that actually occurred in calendar time somewhere in Asia. Thus it is held by Lutheran scholars in Europe and America, by Biblical savants outside and inside the Lutheran Church, that the method of creation given in chapter 1, the crea-

tion of Adam and Eve, the reality of the two trees in Eden, the geographical location of Eden, the institution of marriage, the temptation by Satan using the serpent, the fall of our first parents and the giving of the first Gospel promise are not true historical happenings, but are part of a literary genre employed to teach theological truths but not true historical facts.

What is the understanding of the Lutheran Confessions concerning the events just alluded to as referred to in Genesis 1-3? The doctrine of creation as outlined in chapter 1:1-2:3 was not doubted by Roman Catholics at Luther's time so there did not need to be discussion regarding a teaching accepted by Roman Catholics and Lutherans. Therefore, there are not many references to the creative activity of God during the six-day creation. Melanchthon does refer to fiat creation (i.e. creation by command of God) when he wrote: "Look at their clever argument! The Word of God did not form the nature of men to be fruitful only at the beginning of creation, but it still does as long as this physical nature of ours exists. Just so this Word makes the earth fruitful" Gen. 1:11), "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed." (Apology XXIII, 8, p. 240 of Theodore G. Tappert, *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959). In the Augsburg Confession Melanchthon cited Gen. 1:27 to the effect that God created man as male and female (Aug. II, 19, Tappert, P. 102). In the article on "Original Sin" Melanchthon quoted Gen. 1:27, where it is stated that man was created in the image of God after His likeness (Augsburg Confession II, 18, Tappert, p. 102). What is meant by the image of God is then defined as follows: "What else is this than that a wisdom and righteousness was implanted in man that would grasp God and reflect him, that is, that man received gifts like the knowledge of God? So Ireneus interprets the likeness of God" (Augsburg Confession II, 18, Tappert pp. 102-103). The command given by God to male and female that they were to be fruitful and fill the earth is quoted twice in the Confessions and were regarded by the authors as a command given to the first

(Continued on Page 8)

Affirm

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

All correspondence, editorial material, contributions, and communications about subscriptions should be addressed to:

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Missions and ELIM

A partnership of some missions and ELIM has resulted in a strange series of events occurring in Hong Kong during 1974. One is the July Hong Kong Consultation of Asian churches; the other is the Hong Kong split. Little has been said about them by Missouri's Board for Missions, but two independent journals—one liberal and the other conservative—have provided extensive coverage. *Affirm* offers an analysis.

The Hong Kong Consultation has apparently produced conduct which raises serious questions about some missionaries and sister church leaders. It also apparently raises questions about ELIM strategy, influence and activity, and its use of missionaries and nationals to further ELIM theology and practice. The following events are noteworthy:

1. *The Hong Kong* group met without the Board for Missions present or realizing that it was being tried *in absentia*. The nationals heard only what ELIM's missionaries told them, yet the Asians told the Board for Missions majority to resign or be removed from office—thus joining forces with ELIM Board members. This unilateral action appears unfair.

2. No affirmations were made on Biblical Christianity and confessional Lutheranism. Many complaints were made about orthodox positions, but no concerns about current aberrations in the LC-MS such as ELIM theology, Seminex, unionism, etc., were expressed.

3. *The Asians* complained about an India lawyer who made a speaking tour in the LC-MS in June, 1973, as being a dissident, but the opposite is true: one of the Hong Kong delegates was at New Orleans and participated as a dissident with the liberals against the Missouri Synod (reported by *Affirm* in a convention issue). At the same time, another Hong Kong participant, President Waesa of New Guinea, was sponsored on an ELIM speaking tour in the LC-MS last February.

4. *The Asians* used ELIM's facilities and finances to send a letter unwisely to the LC-MS to criticize the theological stance of the Board for Missions (which follows that of the LC-MS) and stated that the Board was "working contrary to the spirit of the Gospel," and that its "mission philosophy and theology are foreign to the LC-MS." Making alliance with ELIM, these leaders said they wanted "evangelical theology and practice." Intemperate remarks were made, e.g., the Board for Missions "treated us as if we were their property;" and, "There is no evidence of repentance on the part of the Board."

5. Halfway through the Hong Kong Consultation of July 15-19, 1974, it was decided that the Asians would pass their resolutions by consensus. It has been reported that the Taiwan president wrote that he did not agree with the resolutions, the India Church Council denounced most of the resolutions, the Philippines had no national present, and the New Guinea and Korean presidents were dependent on interpretation by ELIM missionaries.

6. The Asians listened to Hong Kong liberals about their split while refusing to listen to the complaints of the Hong Kong critics who were condemned.

THE Hong Kong split was covered recently in two journals, which made clear the alliance between ELIM and Hong Kong liberals. Attempting to implicate that Board Chairman, liberals built their case on unsubstantiated rumors, not reported to the individual criticized, and on misinterpretations of a simple letter. No concrete evidence against the Board for Missions was given while liberal opinions about the Board contained critical remarks like, "secret communication . . . deception," etc.

The Hong Kong liberals ignored the testimony of the conservatives at their organization meeting on May 18th that no "outside encouragement or support" was received and that their act was a matter of conscience. The liberals ignored a September 24th statement by the Board Chairman that he and the Board could not recognize the new group.

Missourians will find the partnership between ELIM with its deviant theology and some missionaries and some overseas nationals an unlikely partnership, resulting in a strange series of events in Hong Kong this year. *Affirm* hopes that the matter will soon be clarified in a God-pleasing manner.

Affirm's Mailing List

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Congregations and other groups may order copies of *Affirm* at the bulk rate of \$4.00 per hundred. This price includes postage and handling. Single copies are 10 cents each.

STILL another effort will be made to heal the breach in Missouri. A theological convocation has been called by the Council of Presidents and is scheduled for April 14-18, 1975 at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Some 300 persons drawn from all levels of church life have been invited to attend.

EARLY in 1975, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations will mail all pastors, teachers and religious leaders of Missouri a statement about ecumenism. It will include the basic Lutheran principles of ecumenism as well as guidelines and priorities in achieving ecumenical goals.

ONE of the recent visitors to the St. Louis campus attending some evening gathering or another remarked that, for the first time in years, there seemed to be a positive spirit and a sense of common purpose on this campus. It is good to know that the school once torn by dissension and then reduced to a school with few faculty members and students, has started again to reflect the spirit and strength which have marked Missouri since her foundation.

Concordia Seminary Resolutions

RESOLUTION I: THE USE OF THE NAME 'CONCORDIA SEMINARY'

WHEREAS, Former Faculty members of Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis have formed an educational institution known as the "Joint Project for Theological Education" with Eden Theological Seminary and the School of Divinity of Saint Louis University; and

WHEREAS, These former Faculty members have incorporated themselves under the Laws of the State of Missouri to provide theological training; and

WHEREAS, These individuals have improperly and illegally appropriated to themselves the name "Concordia Seminary," by calling themselves "Concordia Seminary in Exile"; and

WHEREAS, Both Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis and Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, as well as other institutions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod bearing the name "Concordia," including nearly all its colleges and publishing house, are injured by the misappropriation of their name, "Concordia"; and

WHEREAS, The use of the name "Concordia" by the "Joint Project for Theological Education" gives the false impression that this institution is one belonging to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, when it is neither owned nor in any way regulated by this Synod; and

WHEREAS, The use of the name "Concordia" by the "Joint Project for Theological Education" will only continue to cause confusion; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Faculties of Concordia Seminary and Concordia Theological Seminary, meeting jointly in Springfield on November 26, 1974, request urgently that the Board of Directors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and/or the Boards of Control of the two Seminaries take immediately all necessary steps to protect the name "Concordia Seminary," including, if necessary, the seeking of an injunction for the discontinuance of the name "Concordia Seminary" or similar name by the "Joint Project for Theological Education" or any successor groups.

RESOLUTION II: THE CALLING OF CANDIDATES

WHEREAS, The Faculties of Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis and Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, have been entrusted by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with the preparation of pastors for the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Faculties, individually and jointly, have assumed this high trust voluntarily and realize the great responsibility associated with this trust; and

WHEREAS, The Faculties, individually and jointly, desire to exercise this trust and responsibility given them by the congregations of the Synod over against the men who are or will be studying for the Ministry, in accord with the regulations prescribed by the Synod, whose doctrinal unity is treasured by the Faculties; and

WHEREAS, The regulations prescribed in the synodical *Handbook* exist for the protection and spiritual wellbeing of the congregations of the Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, That we urge the congregations of the Synod to follow the official synodical procedures, by calling only such candidates as their pastors, who are recommended to the Church by Concordia Seminary, Concordia Theological Seminary or the Colloquy Board.

RESOLUTION III: THE EFFORTS OF 'THE JOINT PROJECT FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION' TO PLACE GRADUATES AND VICARS

WHEREAS, The Joint Project for Theological Education, "Seminex," continues to seek placement of its graduates and

vicars in the Congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Joint Project for Theological Education seeks to carry out its field education program, by placing its students in Congregations of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, Such actions are divisive in the Congregations of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, Such actions are also contrary to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod which all members of the Synod have agreed to uphold and which District Presidents have sworn to uphold; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Faculties of the two synodical, theological Seminaries in joint session, at Springfield, Illinois, November 26, 1974, urgently request the Council of Presidents of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in the interest of maintaining peace and good order in the Congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, to reaffirm their own Resolution that graduates of the Joint Project for Theological Education be placed only 1974 ("for this year only"), after proper certification, and that the Council of Presidents state publicly that they will not individually or collectively as a Council place individuals as graduates or vicars, who do not meet the certification requirements of the synodical *Handbook*, nor will they authorize their ordination or installation.

RESOLUTION IV: ACTION TAKEN BY THE DIRECTOR OF FIELD EDUCATION OF 'THE JOINT PROJECT FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION'

WHEREAS, The Director of Field Education for the Joint Project for Theological Education, "Seminex," has encouraged pastors and congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to request Seminex vicars; and

WHEREAS, He has further suggested that applications be sent directly to him, rather than to the Board for Higher Education; therefore be it

Resolved, That we ask the President of the Synod to inform congregations that such a procedure violates the solemn covenant of the synodical fellowship, and causes dissension among brethren; and be it further

Resolved, That we ask the Council of Presidents, meeting as the Board of Assignments, to declare Seminex vicars ineligible for assignment, in accord with their own Resolution of May, 1974, and the Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and be it finally

Resolved, That we ask the Council of Presidents to state clearly that direct assignment of vicars, circumventing the Resolutions of the Council of Presidents and the *Handbook* will not be recognized.

Contributions

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To Keep The Record Straight

BEING negative and critical is not a happy position under any circumstances, particularly when it involves another publication. However, criticism at times can be a duty.

The dissident faction in our Synod, known as ELIM (Evangelical Lutherans in Mission) has a publication called *Missouri in Perspective* (MIP). Hardly anyone questions the right of ELIM to publish. Many, of course, question its right at every turn to oppose Synod, its constitution-by-laws, and its resolutions. But every fair-minded person would expect responsible journalism, not to say, Christian journalism, to observe the fundamental journalistic requirement of speaking the truth and staying with facts.

Yet—and we say this sadly—MIP not only has accidental errors, such as happen despite the best of intentions, but it repeatedly engages in distortions and misrepresentations. Some of these are of such a nature that they lend themselves to the conclusion that they are made deliberately. For example, some months ago, after MIP had repeatedly misrepresented Seminary Board of Control actions, Dr. Ralph Bohlmann, acting president of the Seminary, felt it his duty to issue a mailing about just one MIP article to all our pastors; in it, in parallel columns, he showed a) what MIP had written and b) what the actual facts were.

ANOTHER case of an article with distortions can be found in MIP's November 18th issue, page 3, in which various past actions of the St. Louis Seminary Board of Control are commented on.

Item 1: MIP's headline reads, "Accusers, Judges, and Jury."

Fact: The Board of Control has not functioned as Dr. Tietjen's accuser. The charges on which Dr. Tietjen was dismissed from office were filed with the Board of Control by two members of Synod. The Board, according to synodical by-law 6.79, simply processes charges.

Item 2: MIP criticizes synodical President Preus for not publishing a given 1973 action of the Board of Control.

Fact: Dr. Preus is neither voting member nor staff member of the Board. Board actions are published by the Board.

Item 3: MIP: "Charles Burmeister and Eugene Fincke in a minority report printed in the 1973 New Orleans convention Workbook . . ."

Fact: Burmeister and Fincke did not submit a minority report. They wrote a letter to Dr. Preus, calling to his attention as synodical president, certain facts regarding the Seminary Board of Control. Dr. Preus, within the province of his office, published the letter in the New Orleans Convention Workbook together with other material relative to the Seminary problems which required synodical action.

Item 4: MIP: President Preus, Dr. Edwin Weber and Board chairman Otto "agreed to drop the charges against Dr. Tietjen if he would take a call elsewhere in the Synod."

Fact: The charges against Dr. Tietjen were filed with the Board of Control by two pastors. The three men mentioned by MIP, neither individually nor collectively, have any authority or control over the charges. In fact, not even the Board of Control itself can drop charges filed by others. It is obviously therefore, in utter disregard for the truth when MIP states that "The President of the Synod and two board members participated in a conspiracy to influence the judicial process of the Board."

Item 5: MIP states, "Since 1969 Pastor Otto had declared his attitude toward Dr. Tietjen's presidency in the publications of Balance, Inc., referring to him as 'the seminary honcho.'"

Fact: All issues of *Affirm*, the publication of Balance, Inc., have been searched for articles by Pastor Otto. He has written 26 articles. In seven of them Dr. Tietjen is mentioned either by name or he is referred to as the Seminary president. Let's look at the seven references.

June 1972: In a discussion of Bible interpretation, it is stated that "The Seminary president responded" that the Historical-Critical Method is necessary in Seminary training and that he was "unwilling to act."

December 1972: "Seminary president John Tietjen has been made a member of the AATS executive board."

May 1973: The article asks whether we would not expect that "the Seminary President, the faculty, and the Council of Presidents would welcome an evaluation" by Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) of the faculty's doctrinal stance statements in the document "Faithful to our Calling etc." The article notes that in a CTCR meeting Dr. Tietjen objected to a CTCR evaluation. The article asks why he would want faculty members to issue doctrinal statements but would not want such statements evaluated, and poses the question, "What is seminary President Tietjen afraid of?"

June 1973: The article offers the factual statement that the Seminary president, speaking before the Council of Presidents, "labelled the Synodical President's theology sub-Biblical and un-Lutheran."

October 1973: In an article on the need for discipline in a church body it is pointed out that Synod at New Orleans called for discipline. "Discipline was explicit when Synod dealt with the St. Louis Seminary and its president."

March 1974: In a summary of Board of Control actions, the statement is made: "The seminary president, under most serious indictment by Synod at the New Orleans Convention, was temporarily suspended."

July 1974: An article titled "A Time to Build" reviews what had happened at the Seminary in January 1974 and states that "the suspension of the school's president" signalled a walk-out by a majority of both faculty members and students. The article also points out that, when the accreditation agency for theological schools lifted our Seminary's probation, "we had the sad spectacle of the suspended president attending the AATS convention in Atlanta in mid-June in an effort to destroy the school's accreditation."

BY no stretch of the imagination can these references be construed as showing that "Since 1969 Pastor Otto had declared his attitude toward Dr. Tietjen's presidency in the publications of Balance, Inc. referring to him as 'the seminary honcho.'"

In none of the articles, it is noted, did Pastor Otto call him "the seminary honcho." Though, frankly, one finds it hard to see what would have been wrong with the term, used widely with regard to the chairman of any committee or organization.

We have gone to some length to point out the massive errors in just one MIP article covering about one-third of a page. In an 8-page publication the total number of the misrepresentations, distortions, and disregard for facts qualify MIP for the strong indictment that it is unfair and unreliable.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
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Genesis 1-3

(Continued from Page 4)

human pair, Adam and Eve (Apology XXXIII, 7, Tappert, p. 240; Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration VII, 76, Tappert, p. 583). In the Large Catechism Luther refers to the fact that God ceased from His creative activity and set the seventh day apart as a day of rest (LC, 80, Tappert, p. 375).

THE historicity of Adam and Eve, denied by modern critical scholars, is accepted by the authors of the Formula of Concord. Thus in the article treating of the Third Use of the Law, Solid Declaration, we read: "For the law is written on their hearts, just as the first man immediately after his creation received law according to which he should conduct himself." (Tappert p. 564). In the Augsburg Confession, in the article dealing with "Monastic Vows," Melancthon cites in favor of marriage the Mosaic assertion of Genesis 2:18: "It is not good that a man should be alone I will make him a helper fit for him" (Augsburg Confession XXVII, 21 Tappert, p. 74). The divine institution of marriage which involved one man, Adam, and one woman, Eve, is accepted as factual and true. Such a position is rejected by the practitioners of the Historical-Critical Method relative to Genesis 1-2.

The events of chapter 3 are interpreted symbolically, mythically or parabolically by modern Lutheran critical scholars. This type of interpretation contradicts the clear assertions of the Lutheran Confessions. Thus the Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article I on "Original Sin" declares: "It is of course true that this creature and handiwork of God has been miserably corrupted by sin, for the dough out of which God forms and makes man has been corrupted and perverted in Adam and is transmitted to us in this condition." (Tappert, p. 515). The various details of the fall given in Genesis 3 are considered factual and historical. Thus the Formula of Concord speaks of Satan as the instigator of sin, the person who "corrupted God's handiwork," (Tappert, p. 513). In the Smalcald Articles Luther asserted: All this is the old devil and the old serpent who made enthusiasts of Adam and Eve (Part III, Article VIII, 5, Tappert, p. 312).

In the Lutheran Confessions the connection is often made between Adam's fall (sin) and our sinful condition (Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration I, 28, Tappert, p. 513; Apology II, 5, Tappert, p. 101; Augsburg Confession II, 1, Tappert, p. 29). Moreover, since the fall of Adam all men propagated by human beings are born in sin (Augsburg Confession, II, 1, Tappert, p. 29). That Adam fell into sin is also supported in the Lutheran Confessions on the basis of Romans 5:12: "Thus, then, sin came into the world through one man, and through sin came death; and so death spread to all men, because all had sinned." In 5:14 Paul

teaches: "Nevertheless from Adam to Moses death reigned as king, even over those who had sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression."

WHILE chapter 3 of Genesis can be called "the saddest chapter in the Bible," there is contained in verse 15 a ray of hope in the promise of a coming individual who would crush the serpent's head. In Article V of the Formula of Concord, the authors assert: "Since the beginning of the world these two proclamations (i.e. Law and Gospel) have continually been set forth side by side in the church of God with the proper distinction. The descendants of the patriarchs themselves, constantly reminded themselves not only how man in the beginning was created righteous and holy by God and through deceit of the serpent transgressed God's laws, became a sinner, corrupted himself and all his descendants and plunged them into death and eternal damnation, but also revived their courage and comforted themselves with the proclamation of the woman's seed who would bruise the serpent's head . . ." (Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration V, 23, Tappert p. 562). Modern critical scholarship sees only in Genesis 3 a prediction that henceforth men and snakes will hate each other!

Those who advocate the use of the Historical-Critical Method relative to the interpretation of Genesis 1-3, are in disagreement with the interpretation of the writers of the Lutheran Symbols. The result is that the Understanding of the New Testament on Genesis 1-3 is questioned and denied; further, there is a denial of the unity of the human race, no answer for the true origin of sin or its transmission from Adam to his future descendants or information how God's wonderful plan of salvation was initiated.

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Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls, within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

WALTHER MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
4040 W. Fond du Lac Ave.
Milwaukee, Wis. 53216

Non-Profit Orgn.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Milwaukee, Wis.
PERMIT No. 3110



RECEIVED

Volume IV. No. 10
January 25, 1975

FEB 17 1975

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"

2 Cor. 4:13

Time's Cover Story

MANY hope and pray that Missouri will take decisive steps, in the interests of all its members, at its convention in Anaheim this summer to achieve reconciliation or, if that is not possible, to bring to a satisfactory conclusion the dispute it lives through so disruptively.

The December 30 issue of *Time* carries a cover story which any Missourian aware of the events in his church the past decade must have turned to before he read anything else in its pages; *The Bible: The Believers Gain*.

Missouri's controversy, as *Time* accurately records, recently split a 90-year-old congregation in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, "Its liberal-leaning pastor, who quit under pressure from his deacons for his scriptural views, is being followed into exile by 50 of Trinity's families, with whom he is forming a new congregation."

This clergyman, The Rev. Richard Osing, 41, "... made it clear that he doubted that Jonah or Adam and Eve were historical and that Jesus turned water into wine."

Phil Beck, the church's Sunday School superintendent, explained, "The Lutheran Church has always been based on the Bible. If you start questioning it, where do you stop? If I have to have that much education to sit down and understand *Genesis*, then why did God ever let Luther put it in the people's language? At what point do I throw the whole mad mess out of the door? And at what point will my children throw it away?"

TIME continues, "*The plea of that Cedar Rapids father is at the heart of the Biblical controversy today, for he represents millions of Christians and Jews. His concern is a basic, agonizing one for any believer: How do you preserve faith in the Bible in a world that seems increasingly faithless?*" (Italics added)

Time's eight-page story on this question should forever disabuse any thoughtful Missourian of several ideas, which seem to persist among so many of us: that its struggle is merely a political one and a matter of personalities or that it is a recon-dite struggle among theologians which has no practical bearing on the layman, his future, and the future of the church.

Time gives Missouri's tensions a perspective and breadth of interpretation not found as often as they should be in the press. It points out that the Roman Church now undergoes the same debate and that Jewish religious thought also struggles with the same questions of the truth or inaccuracy and untruthfulness of the Old Testament.

Time points out explicitly also that the Presbyterian Church has lately faced the issue and split, but what *Time* is not explicit about (though it is implicit in the whole story) is that most of Protestantism has long since passed through this debate, that most of it has, as a result, lost the great basics of the Christian faith, turned toward a social gospel which sweeps aside the message of salvation as God formulated it in John 3:16, and that, as a result, the liberal sector of Protestantism has declined.

IT could be argued that if Pastor Osing personally doesn't believe in the factualness of the Jonah story, e.g., this in itself—did he accept the rest of the Word as Lutherans traditionally have—would be a small matter in the long and great history of the church, and that this blind spot (or whatever you might want to name it) in him wouldn't jeopardize his own salvation.

But that isn't the argument. The argument is precisely what his former layman said it was: If you once start questioning the Bible, where do you stop? All liberal Protestantism has answered the layman's question with a century of American history: you stop wherever you feel like stopping. You unravel, if not at first, then in the next and next generations, the whole fabric of Christian beliefs.

That's the argument, and it's unanswerable by the liberals, simply because all Protestant history offers fact after fact to show that this has invariably happened.

Sincere people in Missouri, whose integrity must be respected, believe that they can use the Historical-Critical Method with "Lutheran presuppositions" and not go down the hill down which Protestantism has gone. But we already have, not just the track record of Protestantism or of Jewry; we already have had extreme statements about fundamental Lutheran beliefs in our own midst.

Once the Bible no longer is accepted at face value for what it claims to be, the inerrant Word of God, there is no satisfactory test as to what part of it is His Word and what has been interpolated and is mistaken.

(It is fascinating that on two occasions the *Time* article points up the fact that research is proving the accuracy of Biblical statements. At one place, it states, "Noting one example among many, New Testament Scholar Bruce Metzger observes that the *Book of Acts* was once accused of historical errors for details that have since been proven by archeologists and historians to be correct.")

IN its conclusion *Time* states that men can demythologize the miraculous and explain the marvel, but that "the persistent message of the Bible will not go away. Both in the Jewish and Christian Bibles it is irreducible: some time, some where, God intervened in history to help man. Whether it was at the time of the Exodus... the Incarnation or the Resurrection or any of those many smaller interventions... *ordinary human history was interrupted, and has never been the same since.*" (Italics added)

The conservatives say simply and fully: it was all of these occasions and many more; it was all the occasions recorded in the Bible, and God's intervention includes the writing of the Sacred Record itself.

Any lesser interpretation of it violates the Word, its meaning, and its purpose: the revelation of the grace of God in Christ Jesus for the saving of mankind in the world to come!

That we confess and believe.

That we must act on at Anaheim!